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The Evangelical Voter

Religion and Politics
in America

by
Stuart Rothenberg
and
Frank Newport

The Institute for
Government and Politics
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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

STUART ROTHENBERG holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Connecticut. He edits *The Political Report* and *Election Politics*, and his monographs include *Winners & Losers: Campaigns, Candidates and Congressional Elections* and *Ethnic Voters and National Issues*. He is also the director of the Institute for Government and Politics' Political Division.

FRANK NEWPORT received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Michigan. The author of numerous articles and reviews, some of which have appeared in *The American Sociological Review* and *Social Forces*, he is currently a Vice-President at Tarrance and Associates, a Houston-based survey research firm. His specialties include survey methodology and the sociology of religion.

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SECTION 1

Who Are the Evangelicals?

Chapter I

Evangelicals and Politics

Ten or fifteen years ago it was very easy to pick up a current book on American politics without finding an extensive discussion of the impact and importance of politically active evangelicals and fundamentalists. Religion and politics, of course, intersected from time to time, as with the political campaigns of William Jennings Bryan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries or the 1960 presidential campaign of Catholic John Kennedy.[1] But while some religious figures attracted attention for their political stance—Father Charles Coughlin, Reverend Carl McIntyre, Father Robert Drinan and Reverend Martin Luther King, to name a few—there was no *sustained* religious/political movement of any great importance in the first three-quarters of the 20th century. However, by the early 1980's, major magazines, newspapers, and television networks were devoting time to reports on the growing number of evangelical and fundamentalist Christians and to the corresponding growth of the so-called religious right. Groups such as Moral Majority and Christian Voice were placed under a microscope, as were politically conservative organizations which had close ties to conservative religious preachers and organizations.

A modern-day Rip Van Winkle who fell asleep in 1975 and awoke five years later would have been at a loss to understand how the political landscape could have changed so quickly. But it *has* changed, and politically active religious groups have become a part of the political process. Leaving aside the question of whether the religious right has had more victories or defeats, it is clear that in the 1980's a large number of evangelicals in this country have become political actors. If we are to understand how evangelicals and fundamentalists fit into the larger political and social system, it is important that we understand how they think and behave.

George Gallup Jr. called the year 1976 the "year of the evangelical," largely because the results of a Gallup public opinion poll showed that one-third of all adults had undergone a "born-again" experience and large numbers of those born-again Christians were both Biblical literalists and advocates for their faith.[2] Also during 1976, Democratic presidential hopeful Jimmy Carter made it known that he was a born-again Christian. While Jeffrey Hadden and Charles Swann have written that "Jimmy Carter's margin of victory on his improbable march to the White House may well have been provided by evangelicals,"[3] the link between born-again Christians and organized political activity was relatively slight (at least compared with what would eventually come to pass).

The growth of organized Christian political activity throughout the 1970's and into the 1980's roughly paralleled the growth of the organized conservative movement, frequently called the New Right, and by 1978 the Christian right was being credited with contributing to the defeat of both Iowa Senator Dick Clark and New Hampshire Senator Thomas McIntyre and to the election of Alabama Governor Fob James, all Democrats.[4] During 1979 and 1980, evangelicals, the Christian right and the New Right received more and more attention in the media, which not infrequently lumped all three together and failed to make distinctions among them. In December 1979, *Christianity Today*, the major publication of the evangelical movement, published the first installment of a series of articles about the findings of a new *Christianity Today*/Gallup poll of evangelicals.[5]

One month after the publication of the survey, President Carter was openly courting evangelicals. The *New York Times* reported that in addressing the National Religious Broadcasters the President "stressed the faith he shares with many of the broadcasters in the audience,"[6] and less than one week later the newspaper reported, "After losing favor among many evangelical leaders in the past three years, President Carter made a two-day blitz of witnessing, embracing and grits for breakfast in an attempt to soothe representatives of what they assert are a total 89 million Christian evangelicals."[7] In late June, E. J. Dionne of the *New York Times* wrote that evangelical Christians "are now seen by all three leading Presidential candidates as a critical constituency that must be courted through the careful use of issues, symbols and language."[8] Two months later, Reagan addressed the Dallas meeting of the Religious Roundtable, telling the audience, "I endorse you and what you are doing," and President Carter met with Bailey Smith, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, and other church leaders to try to rebuild his bridges to the evangelical community.[9]

Between August 17th and the end of September the *New York Times* published ten substantial stories on evangelical political activity or reactions to that activity, as well as opinion pieces by its columnists. September 6th's *Congressional Quarterly* included a cover story (five pages, along with three full-page sidebars) entitled "The Evangelical Lobby," and *Newsweek*'s September 15th cover, "Born-Again Politics," included a picture of Jerry Falwell inside a cross, which also served as the "t" in the word "vote."[10] *U.S. News and World Report* ran a four-page story on "Preachers in Politics: Decisive Force in '80?"[11]

Both *Time* and *Newsweek* had run extensive cover stories on the evangelical movement back in 1976, but there was a major difference in the coverage then.[12] The 1976 stories ran in the magazines' religion sections, while the 1980 coverage by national magazines emphasized the political nature of the born-again/evangelical/fundamentalist movement.

There was good reason for this change of focus. Not only were the three major presidential candidates seeking support from evangelical voters, but politically conservative evangelicals apparently played an important role in the primary defeat of John Buchanan, a liberal Republican by Southern standards, at the hands of conservative Albert Lee Smith in Alabama's 6th Congressional District. In addition, evangelicals who were also members of Moral Majority were said to have "taken over" the Alaska Republican Party.[13]

The substantial Republican victories of 1980, which included Ronald Reagan's decisive defeat of Jimmy Carter and Republican control of the United States Senate (for the first time since the Democrats took control of that body with the 1954 elections), gave rise to conflicting interpretations about the political importance of the New Right and the religious right. Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, for example, downplayed the importance of politically conservative religious groups in the election when they wrote, "The efforts to mobilize a religious constituency for political purposes in America had no measurable effect on the 1980 elections."[14] Sociologists Stephen Johnson and Joseph Tamney concluded that the evidence "indicates rather conclusively that [the Christian Right] movement had very little, if any, effect on people's vote for President."[15]

But other observers disagreed. Pollster Louis Harris, for example, examined 15,979 ABC News/Lou Harris surveys taken between October 22 and November 3, 1980 and concluded that Ronald Reagan won "not because the country as a whole went conservative but because the conservatives—particularly the white, moral majority—gave him such massive support."[16] Of the people who in the ABC News/Lou Harris polls said they "belong to or attend in person, watch on television, listen on radio, or receive literature from any evangelical church or preacher," 56% voted for Ronald Reagan while 34% opted for Jimmy Carter and only 7% preferred John Anderson. (Nationwide, Reagan drew 50.7% to Jimmy Carter's 41.0%. John Anderson received 6.6%). Political scientists Arthur Miller and Martin Wattenberg also found that religion was an important factor in the 1980 elections. As they have written, "Moral Majority and other conservative religious groups played a noteworthy role in the defeat of at least some liberal congressional candidates in 1980," and "Empirical evidence does in fact suggest that religiosity increased the likelihood of both voter turnout and efforts to persuade others how to vote in 1980."[17] Regardless of whether one concludes that the religious right was *decisive* in the 1980 elections for President or Congress, most dispassionate observers agree that religious right/New Right forces were important in the election victories of at least a number of conservatives, including Albert Lee Smith in Alabama's 6th Congressional District, Jeremiah Denton in the Alabama Senate race and Charles Grassley in the Iowa Senate contest.

The publicity and media attention accorded the religious right during 1980 created a sense of immediacy for its opponents. Television producer Norman Lear formed "People for the American Way," and during the week prior to the 1980 elections his group began running television spots critical of the religious right.[18] In January of 1981, an Iowa-based newsletter entitled "Watch on the Right" appeared. The newsletter claimed that it would monitor the New Right and promised, "We'll keep a watch on the manipulation by fundamentalist and evangelical church leaders." During the next two or three years a small library of books appeared about evangelicalism and fundamentalism, the electronic church, the religious right and the New Right. Many of these books, such as Conway and Siegelman's *Holy Terror*, Kater's *Christians on the Right* and Maguire's *The New Subversives* were alarmist exposés evidently intended to arouse opposition and discredit their subjects.[19] Most of the works lacked balance or sophistication and were of little help to anyone interested in a serious treatment of the religious-conservative movement. At the same time, academics, who had paid surprisingly little attention to the religious right, began to produce articles and studies.[20] Clearly by this time, the linkage between organized Christians and politics could no longer be ignored.

But if longer works and academic studies were now addressing the relationship between religious groups and politics, day-to-day attention to the religious right began to ebb. While the *New York Times* carried over thirty articles on the conservative-religious right in 1980, the same newspaper published less than ten stories in each of 1981 and 1982. There are a number of reasons for this redirection of media attention, and to some extent they reinforced each other. First, the passing of the actual election meant that much of the religious right's visible political activity was over. The key question was no longer whether Ronald Reagan would win, but how Ronald Reagan would govern. This necessarily meant more attention to the staffing and organization of the administration and less attention to grass roots political groups.

Second, the White House turned to established business and political figures to fill positions in the administration and seemed to downplay many of the social issues. This meant that the religious right was less involved in the administration than many movement conservatives had expected. As Howell Raines later wrote in the *New York Times*, "As President, Mr. Reagan muted his patriotic-religious appeals. . . . for almost twenty months now, the White House has behaved as if the Reagan coalition was one held together by economic philosophy."[21] Indeed, the religious right added to the impression that it was no longer an important political element by complaining that the White House was not giving enough attention to its issues. According to the *New York Times*, leaders of the religious right "say they fear that many religiously conservative voters, who had great hopes for their agenda when Mr. Reagan won in 1980, will stay away from the polls in November [1982], disillusioned by politics."[22] It is not surprising that journalists would pay less attention to the religious right since it no longer seemed the crucial, politically potent force that it once was.

Third, the press so overexposed the religious right during the 1980 election campaign that the relationship between religion and politics was no longer "news" after the election. Tina Rosenberg has written that the media "made" the Moral Majority by focusing on it. Regardless of whether or not her conclusion is completely correct, she presents a persuasive case that heavy coverage of the religious right stemmed from the journalists' own opposition to Jerry Falwell and other religious conservatives. "Feeling defensive, journalists have responded the best way they know: by writing stories."[23] But the media had given the religious right so much attention that they had milked the topic dry. In addition, many of the concerns of the religious right, which had once been considered outside the mainstream, had become institutionalized. The religious right had contributed to the country's political agenda.

Finally, attention waned because the election returns of 1982 appeared to indicate a setback for the right. Conservative Republican Senate challengers were defeated in Tennessee, West Virginia, Maryland and Maine, and conservative House candidates such as incumbents Albert Lee Smith and Tom Hagedorn, and challengers like Bill Cobey and Steve Joachim were defeated. As one political scientist concluded, "As to political power, the Christian conservative movement seemed somehow less significant than before."[24]

But there is likely to be more interest in the so-called Christian religious vote in 1984 and beyond. This constituency went solidly for Reagan four years ago, and political observers and analysts will be certain to follow it to see whether the President's political base has remained intact. Indeed, Ronald Reagan has from time to time indicated his support of the social issue agenda set forth by the religious right. According to the *New York Times'* Adam Clymer, Reagan's speech before the National Association of Evangelicals in Florida in March of 1983 "sounded the themes that won him support from the so-called religious right in his 1980 election."[25] Clymer added, "Mr. Reagan appealed to a constituency that seemed, after his election, to have retired to the political sidelines." The President's speech before the same organization in 1984 coincided with a strong effort on the part of House and Senate supporters of voluntary prayer in school to pass a constitutional amendment. Reagan told his audience that he supports prayer in school, tuition tax credits, more discipline in school and a constitutional amendment banning abortion, all of which is part of the Christian right's political agenda. All of this could once again focus attention on the religious right.

Although the religious right is not likely to be the media fad in 1984 or 1986 that it was in 1980, there are reasons to study it in some detail. Most importantly, estimates of the number of evangelical Christians in the United

States have ranged from 20 million to 60 million (see Chapter II for the various definitions used). This means that a sizable proportion of the adult population, at least fifteen to twenty percent, can be classified as evangelicals, and evangelical Christians constitute a potential voting bloc which is larger than blacks, Hispanics or Jewish voters. In short, the sheer number of evangelicals and fundamentalists make them an interesting and potentially important political force. But while they are in the abstract a potential force they may not be a "practical" force. Their political impact could depend on the extent to which religious beliefs determine, or more accurately shape, political beliefs. If religion is irrelevant to a person's positions on questions of public policy, other factors—income, gender, age or education—would be more important and would constitute the real causal factors behind the electorate's vote. But if religion *is* directly related to issues, it may be possible to appeal to a particular religious constituency on the basis of certain issues and candidate preferences.

Religion may also be important to the extent that any common characteristic provides political parties and candidates with a way to reach and mobilize voters. If voters in this country who share evangelical and fundamentalist religious views are easily reached—through churches, television, religious associations, or simple geographic clustering—this religious bloc becomes important because it provides a *vehicle* for politicians to use in increasing their vote. In other words, even if evangelical or fundamentalist views *per se* do not predict political views, evangelicals and fundamentalists may be important politically because they constitute a group with shared values and organizational membership which are *convenient* for politicians to use. Politicians can "grab hold of" and attempt to convert groups or blocs of voters when they can be reached easily. It is thus important to study both the relationship between religious views and political views, and the ways in which these voters share organizational and other social "binders" in their daily lives.

Even if evangelicals as a whole do not constitute a coherent ideological and political bloc which can be mobilized by one party or point of view, it is clear that some elements of the evangelical movement, most notably the religious right, *are* politically involved and are seeking to add to their numbers and, as a result, their political clout. The conservative-religious right has been engaged in a number of political activities over the past few years, and their efforts to mobilize new voters and affect election outcomes mean that they may remain politically important for some time. In October of 1983, for example, Dick Hackett was elected mayor of Memphis with the help of conservative Christians. When he attended a service at the Bellevue Baptist Church during the campaign, Hackett was introduced by the pastor and received a standing ovation from the audience.[26] Clearly, there were a number of factors behind his election victory (he was the only major white candidate, and he faced a major challenge from black hopefuls, including Congressman Harold Ford's brother), but his election was certainly a victory for conservative fundamentalists.

In recent years, a number of Washington-based conservative groups have sought to recruit fundamentalists as their political allies. The Free Congress Foundation, for example, a research and public policy organization, held a series of lectures entitled "The Morality of Political Action: Biblical Foundations."[27] While the sessions did not urge those evangelicals who attended to support particular policies or candidates, it did urge them to become politically aware and involved by trying to allay their fears that political action was somehow inconsistent with the Bible and their religious beliefs. As a leader of one of these sessions stressed, "It is important for Christians to exercise our civic responsibility precisely because we have a commitment as Christians to do so. This doesn't mean imposing our own values, but it means sharing those values."[28]

But there have also been other attempts to mobilize conservative evangelical forces around the country. In North Carolina, for example, supporters of North Carolina Republican Jesse Helms sought out politically conservative Christians to try to offset black registration and thereby lead to the reelection of the conservative senator. In Tennessee, religious right-conservative Ed McAteer, who helped found the Religious Roundtable, sought the Republican Senate nomination and ultimately announced he would run as an Independent.

At the same time, religious right groups, sometimes working with organized conservative groups, have continued their grass roots organizing efforts. The National Christian Action Coalition, for example, conducted thirty-two one-day political training schools between February 1983 and March 1984. According to Bill Billings, President of the NCAC, the purpose of the training conferences was to "give people who are motivated by their Christian principles the nuts and bolts they need to achieve political victories."[29] The conferences dealt with such topics as vote goals, campaign strategy, volunteer recruitment and fundraising, but they stressed voter registration and political action. "In the typical fundamentalist church, people build their lives around the church. We try to teach them that political activity can become another ministry of their church. They can make it another church activity," adds Billings.

The Christian Voters' Victory Fund, a political action committee connected with NCAC, provides in-kind contributions to congressional races by sending a field person into a campaign to help that campaign create and execute a political program to involve Christians in the race. The PAC, which also gives some contributions to campaigns, was involved in eight or nine races in 1982 and expects the same level of involvement in 1984. Another group, the American Christian Voice Foundation, has joined with Moral Majority to establish an "American Coalition for Traditional Values." Christian Voice's Gary Jarmin says that the Coalition will seek to "identify, target and solicit the cooperation of approximately 100,000 churches to become involved in a voter registration program."[30] Christian Voice also conducts training sessions for pastors on how to conduct voter registration drives in their churches.

Evangelical political activity appears to have grown considerably over the past decade, and there is no indication that conservative political activists will cease their attempts to politicize the evangelical and fundamentalist communities. If this is true, it is important to understand the attitudes of those within the evangelical movement, as well as cross-pressures which will operate on potential evangelical voters. The overriding question may well be: can evangelicals or fundamentalists be mobilized to vote for specific candidates or positions in elections? The answer to this question may depend on answers to other questions: Is there an independent relationship between religion and political attitudes? Which religious measures identify the most Republican or Democratic, conservative or liberal evangelical constituencies? How monolithic are the evangelical and fundamentalist constituencies on a variety of social and foreign policy questions? What sort of impact do ministers, pastors and television evangelists have on evangelical and fundamentalist voters? Only by addressing these sorts of questions can we come to understand the political importance of religious values and memberships for some voters in this country.

In order to help answer these and other questions, this study will explore the results of a specially commissioned public opinion survey of 1,000 evangelicals in the United States. We will employ a number of measures of religiosity and use those various definitions as we examine the empirical data. We can then compare the impact of these variables against traditional demographic variables in order to try and determine the independent effect of religion.

Since we are interested in the connection between religion and politics, we will try whenever possible to compare our results to nationwide survey data. This presents certain problems. A public opinion survey is nothing more than a snapshot of a particular group at a specific time. It is difficult to compare survey responses, especially when the question wording is significantly different and the surveys were not taken at exactly the same time. However, we may in certain cases be able to infer differences and similarities between our evangelical sample and a nationwide sample, depending on the nature of the question and the types of responses. Naturally, any conclusions which result from these comparisons should be treated with some caution.

The survey from which we are drawing our conclusions was taken in the summer of 1983. Some of the questions and responses are of less use now (summer 1984) than they were when the results were first analyzed shortly after the survey was taken. John Glenn, for example, proved to be a less viable candidate than many observers thought. Gary Hart, on the other hand, was largely ignored up until his second place showing in the Iowa caucuses. We will report on our findings about evangelical attitudes to John Glenn's candidacy because we believe that they tell us something about evangelical political orientations and because we can compare evangelical attitudes to nationwide surveys which matched Glenn against Ronald Reagan. But more than that, we can compare our sample of 1,000 evangelicals to our smaller subsamples on the question of a Glenn candidacy. Similarly, we will report on our findings about evangelical attitudes on a number of specific public policy questions even though such responses may be dated. Evangelical attitudes toward defense spending and school prayer, for example, may well have changed because of the national debate over defense spending, the budget deficit and a constitutional amendment to allow voluntary prayer in the public schools. But our data still allow us to compare across subsamples and to compare evangelical responses to nationwide survey data, when available. Moreover, some of the policy questions examined have been debated for a long enough time that attitudes on them are probably relatively stable.

Whether or not columnist Haynes Johnson is correct that "Energizing the 'Christian Community,' as Reagan political operatives refer to the white fundamentalist church groups typified by the Moral Majority, forms a major element in the president's reelection strategy,"[31] evangelicals appear to have become a permanent force in the political arena. Even if their cohesion and impact decrease in 1984, they could still remain a force in the elections to come. But that will depend on a number of factors, not the least being the relationship of religion to politics. And it is this relationship on which we will focus.

Footnotes

1. For a discussion of evangelical political involvement since 1980, see Richard V. Pierard, "The Great Eclipse," *Eternity* 35 (February, 1984): 15-19.
2. See *Newsweek*, October 25, 1976, p. 68.
3. Jeffrey K. Hadden and Charles E. Swann, *Prime Time Preachers: The Rising Power of Televangelism* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1981), p. 125.
4. For example, see *Newsweek*, September 15, 1980, p. 29. Also see *New York Times*, January 21, 1980, p. A21.
5. "The *Christianity Today*/Gallup Poll: An Overview," *Christianity Today* 23 (December 21, 1979): 12-19.
6. *New York Times*, January 22, 1980, p. A17.
7. *New York Times*, January 28, 1980, p. B5.
8. *New York Times*, June 29, 1980, p. A16.
9. See Bill Keller, "Evangelical Conservatives Move from Pews to Polls, But Can They Sway Congress?" *Congressional Quarterly* 38 (September 6, 1980): 2632, 2634.
10. *Newsweek*, September 15, 1980, pp. 28-35.
11. *U.S. News and World Report*, September 15, 1980, p. 24-26.
12. See *Newsweek*, October 25, 1976, pp. 68-78 and *Time*, December 26, 1977, pp. 52-58.
13. *See U.S. News and World Report*, September 15, 1980, p. 25.
14. Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, "The Election and the Evangelicals," *Commentary* 71 (March, 19881): 30.
15. Stephen D. Johnson and Joseph B. Tamney, "The Christian Right and the 1980 Presidential Election," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 21 (June, 1982): 129.
16. ABC News/Harris Survey, November 11, 1980.
17. Arthur H. Miller and Martin P. Wattenberg, "Politics from the Pulpit: Religiosity and the 1980 Elections," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 48 (Spring, 1984): 313-314.

18. *Time*, November 3, 1980, p. 103.

19. Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman, *Holy Terror: The Fundamentalist War on America's Freedoms in Religion, Politics and Our Private Lives* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1982); John L. Kater Jr., *Christians on the Right: The Moral Majority in Perspective* (New York: Seabury Press, 1982); Daniel C. Maguire, *The New Subversives: Anti-Americanism of the Religious Right* (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1982).

20. For example, see John M. Benson, "The Polls: A Rebirth of Religion?" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 45 (Winter, 1981): 576-585; Carol Mueller, "In Search of a Constituency for the 'New Religious Right'," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 47 (Summer, 1983): 213-229; Joseph Tamney and Stephen D. Johnson, "The Moral Majority in Middletown," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 22 (June, 1983): 145-157; Pamela Johnston Conover, "The Mobilization of the New Right: A Test of Various Explanations," *Western Political Quarterly* 36 (December, 1983): 632-649; Michael Lienesch, "Right-Wing Religion: Christian Conservatism as a Political Movement," *Political Science Quarterly* 97 (Fall, 1982): 403-425; Steve Bruce, "Research Note: Identifying Conservative Protestantism," *Sociological Analysis* 44 (Spring, 1983): 65-69; James Davison Hunter, "Operationalizing Evangelicalism: A Review, Critique & Proposal," *Sociological Analysis* 42 (Winter, 1981): 363-372. For a very balanced view of the political impact of the Christian Right, see Robert Zwier, *Born-Again Politics: The New Christian Right in America* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1982).

21. *New York Times*, September 13, 1982, p. B10.

22. *New York Times*, August 16, 1982, p. A13.

23. Tina Rosenberg, "How the Media Made the Moral Majority," *The Washington Monthly* 14 (May, 1982): 33.

24. Michael Lienesch, "Right-Wing Religion: Christian Conservatism as a Political Movement," *Political Science Quarterly* 97 (Fall, 1982): 404.

25. *New York Times*, March 9, 1983, p. A18.

26. I am indebted to Bryan Dodson for much of this information about the Memphis mayor's race.

27. The Free Congress Foundation, through its Institute for Government and Politics, supported the research on which this book is based.

28. This quote is taken from the transcript of the lectures.

29. Telephone communication, March 9, 1984.

30. Telephone communication, March 12, 1984.

31. *The Washington Post*, March 11, 1984, p. A2.

Chapter II
On Defining Evangelicals

We employed a number of different terms when discussing evangelicals in the previous chapter. But it is important to establish clear definitions of our sample and of subsamples if we are to know whom we are talking about. Sociologists, political scientists and journalists have all too frequently used broad definitional terms without defining them with precision. The result is that "born-again," "evangelical," and "fundamentalist" have been used interchangeably when in fact they do not identify the same people.

Steve Bruce certainly is correct in saying that "anyone interested in that range of Protestant religion that is variously called 'conservative,' 'evangelical,' 'fundamentalist,' or 'puritan' cannot help being struck by the lack of consensus about the meaning of terms."[1] The *New York Times*, for example, used the terms evangelical and fundamentalist almost interchangeably in its political articles up until the end of June, 1980.[2] The *Newsweek* cover story of born-agains on September 15, 1980 also appears to have used those terms, as well as "born-again," interchangeably.[3] And when a definition was attempted, it did not always help the reader. For example, one *New York Times* piece defined evangelicals as "Christians dedicated to spreading their faith," hardly a helpful definition.[4] Even academics have fallen into the same habits of lumping evangelicals, fundamentalists and born-agains together. In an article published in 1981, sociologist James Davison Hunter, who is a prolific scholar in the area of evangelicalism, treated evangelicalism as "synonymous with" conservative Protestantism, ascetic Protestantism, orthodox Protestantism and fundamentalism. As he notes, "With few exceptions, these terms are used synonymously by members of the broad culture as well as by social scientists who study this phenomenon."[5] For social scientists trying to understand how a group sees the world, such definitions can be crucial.

There are many ways to develop definitions for the terms evangelical and fundamentalist. One could classify people on the basis of church membership or group association, or on the basis of religious activity or religious beliefs. A membership or association approach makes classification clear and simple. People who are members of certain groups are put in one category, while members of other organizations are put in separate categories. For example, one study examined abortion attitudes in "liberal" and "conservative" churches, with the classifications based on denomination.[6] Another study examined evangelical political activity by drawing a sample from people who attended political mass meetings for an avowedly evangelical candidate for office in Virginia.[7] The author apparently found that her sample's "common denominator" was an "adherence to an evangelical faith," but she did not draw the sample because of that factor. Rather, she drew a random sample from meeting attendees. The major problem with these membership/association criteria is that they impute individual characteristics from group characteristics. For example, while a particular denomination may be "liberal," some of its members may be conservative. In the same vein, non-evangelicals could be drawn to the candidacy of an evangelical office seeker, and drawing a sample from a political meeting may tell us less about evangelical political attitudes and more about the attitudes of people who attend political meetings. In either case, evangelicals who are members of "nonevangelical" denominations, who do not attend political meetings, or who might be turned off by a particular candidate even though he is an evangelical would be missed because of the approach.

Another interesting example of the potential problems with this classification approach concerns the Southern Baptist Denomination. Southern Baptists constitute the largest Protestant denomination in this country—with over 14 million members. They are usually thought of as evangelical, fundamentalist and conservative, and thus one might be tempted to classify any Southern Baptist church member as an "evangelical" or "fundamentalist." The reality of the situation, of course, is that any denomination as large as the Southern Baptists has significant variation within it. This potential variation is exaggerated in this instance because of the Baptist tradition of allowing each local church to elect its own minister, and because of the absence of any denomination-wide screening or strict control on doctrine. Thus there are particular Southern Baptist churches and certainly groups of Southern Baptist members who are not fundamentalist and who may be quite liberal. (Conservative Southern Baptist leaders, in fact, have been agitating in recent years to attempt to bring the denomination back to what they consider to be its more conservative, fundamentalist roots.) Any attempt to *assume* that all Southern Baptists are fundamentalist or evangelical is therefore incorrect and will produce error.

Most approaches classify people on the basis of their religious beliefs *and* their religious and social activities. In other words, behavioral measures (e.g., frequency of church attendance, frequency of reading the Bible, etc.) are employed in conjunction with attitudinal ones. A social-behavioral criterion might ask, for example, whether a person drinks or dances, assuming that the respondent abstains because of religious beliefs. Miller and Wattenberg established what they called a "scale of fundamentalism" based on six questions, including importance of religion, status of the Bible, attitudes toward the Moral Majority and born-again status.[8] Johnson and Tamney classified people as being members of the "Christian Right" depending upon their answers to questions about the Bible, the second coming of the Messiah, the relationship between the United States and God, and voluntary prayer in the classroom.[9] These techniques combine religious beliefs and religiously political attitudes in classifying people.

Christianity Today divided evangelicals into two groups in its 1979 study.[10] The first group, "orthodox evangelicals," agreed that

(1) Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God, or is both fully God and fully man,
(2) The only hope for heaven is through personal faith in Jesus Christ, and
(3) The Bible is the Word of God and is not mistaken in its statements and teachings.

Orthodox evangelicals also read the Bible at least once each month and attended religious services at least once per month. On the other hand, "conversionalist evangelicals," the second group, read the Bible, attended religious services and had to have had a "powerful religious experience" that continues to be important to them and that "they understand as a conversion experience that included an identifiable point at which they asked Jesus Christ to become their personal savior." Respondents in the *Christianity Today* sample were selected on the basis of religious beliefs (about the Bible and the road to personal salvation, for example), with religious experiences (being born-again) and religious behavior (frequency of church attendance and Bible reading).

George Gallup has frequently used another set of questions to classify evangelicals.[11] He defines evangelicals as people who:

(1) say they have had a born again experience or call themselves born again Christians,
(2) have encouraged other people to believe in Jesus Christ, and
(3) believe in the literal interpretation of the Bible.

This second component, evangelism, has been used by many commentators. While other criteria involve a personal experience or set of beliefs and some religious behavior, Gallup and others require the evangelical to "spread the message" among non-evangelicals. This is a very different requirement since it means that evangelicals must do more than simply believe certain religious dogma. They must seek out non-believers and convert them (or at least pass along their message). There can be significant dispute on this point. There are many deeply fundamentalist individuals who, for one psychological reason or the other, have not attempted to convert others to their position, and thus who would fail the "Gallup" test for inclusion into an evangelical sample. It can be strongly argued that this exclusion would remove a significant group of individuals who in all other respects—including the political behavior which is the context of the present study—would think and act like their evangelizing brethren.

Clearly, there are a number of different ways to define evangelicals and to categorize them. The main problem is not only distinguishing evangelicals from other Christians, but distinguishing fundamentalists from evangelicals. Richard Quebedeaux deals with the problem by setting up a fundamentalist-evangelical continuum, which includes (1) separatist fundamentalists, (2) open fundamentalists, (3) establishment evangelicals, (4) new evangelicals, and (5) young evangelicals.[12] Separatist fundamentalists are not only theologically orthodox, but they believe that they must separate themselves from society and society's modernism. At the other end of the continuum are the young evangelicals, who in many ways are closer to the mainline Protestant churches. They are less interested in theology and more concerned with the socio-political struggles of the world. In between are three categories, some less orthodox and more modernist than others.

Sociologist Nancy Ammerman agrees that fundamentalists emphasize separation from society, but she also notes that fundamentalists are Biblical literalists, while not all evangelicals claim that the Bible is infallible.[13] She also adds that fundamentalists differ from evangelicals in their belief of dispensational premillenialism, a doctrine which concerns itself with the end of the world and the second coming of the Messiah. James Barr begins his study of fundamentalism by citing what he calls the "three most pronounced characteristics" of fundamentalism:

> (1) a very strong emphasis on the inerrency of the Bible, the absence from it of any sort of error;
>
> (2) a strong hostility to modern theology and to the methods, results and implications of modern critical study of the Bible;
>
> (3) an assurance that those who do not share their religious viewpoint are not really "true Christians" at all.[14]

Any hope of coming up with a neat and crisp definition of fundamentalism would be dashed by the recognition that there are divisions even within the ranks of those most often referred to as fundamentalists. For example, the World Congress on Fundamentalism condemned Jerry Falwell in 1983, and fundamentalist Bob Jones has called Falwell "the most dangerous man in America."[15] Fundamentalists such as Bob Jones are strict separatists who avoid modernism as completely as possible. According to Richard Quebedeaux, fundamentalists have "tended to live in a cultural time warp, rejecting almost all of the values not only of religious modernism or liberalism but also of the wider society itself. For them there is not much difference between religious liberalism and out-and-out secularism."[16] But fundamentalists such as Falwell have become involved in American politics, and Falwell's Liberty Baptist College has adopted standards for its students which are much more modern. Falwell himself associates frequently with non-evangelicals and forms political alliances with them. That is something that Bob Jones would never do.[17]

But while it is important to recognize differences in the fundamentalist community, it is also important to recognize that fundamentalists and evangelicals have certain common beliefs. As David Moberg has written,

> Both evangelicals and fundamentalists are committed to the basic fundamentals of the Christian faith—the deity and virgin birth of Jesus Christ, his vicarious atonement for sin, his bodily resurrection, his personal second coming, and the inspiration and the authority of the Bible.[18]

Evangelicals and fundamentalists are thus both devoted Christians, but there are differences between them. There are also differences among fundamentalists, as we have seen. The problem is arriving at a set of definitions which create categories which are meaningful because they identify a group of people who have certain traits in common and because they are large enough to be politically important. This, then, is the methodological challenge of this study. Our response to that challenge will be discussed in the paragraphs which follow.

Methodology

The basic intent of the survey research project which comprises the basis for this volume was to obtain interviews with a random sample of evangelical Christians in this country. There are, to begin with, no accurate and complete sampling frames of evangelical Christians available. There are, of course, membership lists for various churches and denominations, subscriber lists for various publications, contribution lists to various evangelical and fundamentalist organizations and television programs, and so forth—but none of these or even a combination of these comprise a true or accurate list of all evangelicals in this country. Thus our initial decision methodologically was to create a true random probability sample of *all* households in the continental United States, and then to screen household occupants for evangelical status until we had completed the requisite number of interviews.

To that end, the basic sample for this project consisted of a random probability sample of all telephone households in the continental United States. This sample was drawn using random digit dialing techniques such that all households—including those with unlisted numbers—had an equal chance of falling into the sample. This sample consisted of over 12,000 household phone numbers. Our objective in this study was to complete interviews with 1,000 individuals who could be classified as evangelicals.

Our next key decision concerned the development and operationalization of our screening definition for "evangelicals." We studied the existing literature carefully, and held discussions with a variety of different experts and those who had worked closely in the scholarly area of attempting to identify evangelicals in this country. Our conclusion, as we have already noted, was: there is no consensus on how to define an evangelical.

It was thus apparent that we would have to make definitional assumptions in order to carry out this study. The matter was not nearly simple as it would be, for example, to decide on a definition for labor union membership in this country, or a definition for who constitutes a Republican or a Democrat or who constitutes a black or Hispanic, or other more easily definable characteristics.

From a scholarly standpoint, the most advantageous approach would be to complete a large number of interviews with a random sample of *all* American Christians. Within this large body of interviews, we could then ask a wide variety of evangelical and fundamentalist screen questions, and in the analysis phase of the project, we could use a variety of different types of definitions and compare and contrast how well they defined or predicted the group we were after. Unfortunately, for economic reasons, we did not have available the resources to complete a large survey project with the 3,000 or 4,000 people it would take to complete 1,000 interviews with those that we could probably classify as evangelicals or fundamentalists. Thus, we decided on a second strategy which combines some elements of the one we have just described. We made the decision to adopt a fairly general, broad screening definition of "evangelical" and to use that as the basic screen for inclusion in our sample. Thus, our basic 1,000 interviews would be completed only with those individuals who could reasonably be considered—using fairly general criteria—to be evangelical Christians. Then, in the body of the study, we would use a series of different, more stringent definitional questions which could separate out more fundamentalist evangelicals for analysis purposes.

Our definition for inclusion in our basic sample—that is, our very basic definition of who constitutes an evangelical Christian in this country—was the following:

(1) The individual was first screened for Christian religion.

(2) The individual must have responded affirmatively to the following question:

> "Do you personally believe that Jesus Christ is a real person who lived on this earth and was also the unique son of God?"

(3) The individual must have responded affirmatively to *one* of the following two questions:

> "And in your opinion does a person need to personally accept Jesus Christ as his or her savior in order to have eternal salvation and to be saved from eternal hell?"
>
> "Would you call yourself a born-again Christian, that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?"

This, based on our discussions with experts and review of the literature, constitutes a very basic definition of an evangelical Christian in this country. Several points are worth noting. First, we did not make it mandatory that the individual report having had a "born-again" experience in order to be included in the basic sample. This is based on the assumption that many evangelicals, or even fundamentalists, in this country may not be familiar with or react affirmatively to the "born-again" terminology even though they may in fact be an evangelical. We did include the respondent's answer to the born-again question as a point of analysis, so in this volume we are able to separate out those who report affirmatively that they have had a born-again experience and see how they compare to those who have not. Second, we did not use a literal interpretation of the Bible as a screen. We did, as we will discuss below, include a literal interpretation question in the survey so that we can separate out those who do have a literal interpretation from those who do not. However, it was our assumption that the literal interpretation screen was too limiting. (These limitations will be discussed in subsequent chapters.) Third, we did not include a proselytizing screen in this definition since it has been pointed out that there are a variety of different types of evangelical or even fundamentalist Christians who in fact have never for one reason or another attempted to proselytize others to the faith. As James Hunter has noted,

> Evangelicals tend to judge between in-group and out-group (believers and nonbelievers) not on the basis of whether one has encouraged others to believe in Jesus Christ, but on the basis of adherence to certain beliefs. While lay evangelism can measure the degree of seriousness of an individual's commitment, its inclusion as a part of the operational definition excludes those who may be believers but are more privitistic in the experience of their faith.[19]

Fourth, Catholics were included in the sample, although at various points in the analysis we will separate out Protestants from Catholics—as well as separating out particular Protestant denominations. Hunter argues that "Evangelicalism/Fundamentalism is a Protestant phenomenon." However, the *Christianity Today*/Gallup study found that nearly four million of the thirty-one million adult evangelicals were Catholic. Moreover, we are interested in examining the political views of a group of people who have certain traits in common, particularly the belief in the divinity of Jesus and the belief that it is necessary to "accept" Jesus Christ as personal savior. In other words, we are interested in a group which has common beliefs, and there is no reason why Catholics who hold the same views as evangelical Protestants should automatically be excluded from the sample. Fifth, blacks were included in this sample. At various points in the analysis we will separate out white evangelicals from blacks and analyze their differences.

As we have already discussed, in the body of the survey itself we have included a variety of additional religiosity measures which we will use in our analysis to separate out various groups who may be more or less evangelical, or more or less fundamentalist, than our basic sample. These will be discussed below.

Measuring Religiosity: Identifying Other Variables

In their extensive study *Patterns of Religious Commitment*, Stark and Glock noted, "Church membership, belief in religious doctrines, and ethical way of life, attendance at worship services, and many other acts, outlooks and conditions can all denote piety and commitment to religion."[20] Since we are interested in determining certain things about the relationship between religion and politics, it is important for us to be able to classify people on the basis of their religiosity. We have already operationalized the term "evangelical," but evangelicalism includes many types of Christians. Some, such as fundamentalists, are very religious and orthodox in their beliefs. Others are less orthodox and more ecumenical. Because our definition of evangelical is broad, we divided our sample into a number of smaller subsamples, each of which measures a particular aspect of religiosity or fundamentalism.

We asked those surveyed whether religion was "extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important" in their daily lives. This is a self-defined measure that creates a straightforward measure of religiosity. (However, the measure is subjective on the part of the respondent, and we, of course, do not know what each person means by his response, or whether each respondent means the same thing by "religion.")

We also asked those people who participated in the survey whether or not they were fundamentalists:

> When you describe your religious views to someone, do you generally call yourself a fundamentalist, or not?

Once again, this is a measure of self-identification, which places a burden on the part of the respondent to classify or label himself. This question differs from the previous one because it asks specifically about fundamentalism, which carries with it certain connotations, not all of which are regarded by many people as being complimentary. This means that one might hold the religious views of a fundamentalist and behave like a fundamentalist and still not call oneself by the term "fundamentalist," because of the unfamiliarity with the term or because one would not want to be connected with it. Still, the question could be expected to identify many fundamentalists and particularly those "movement" fundamentalists who take pride in the term.

Evangelicals can also be categorized by religious practice. We asked those participating in the survey: How often do you attend religious services? This provides a measure of what is probably the most important form of religious behavior in this country. This measure is not without its problems. We know that church attendance has many psychological and social functions for the individual, and that high attendance in some instances is a result of the individual's need for social approval, or need for a social support group, or as a result of strong socialization, or for a variety of other reasons. We also know that certain very religious individuals and groups of individuals have in essence "given up" on the local church, and are meeting in small groups in neighborhood living rooms. According to Hunter,

> Just as it is inappropriate to employ a moral criterion to delimit an essentially theological phenomenon, so too is it inappropriate to impose certain behavioral dimensions of religiosity (Bible readings and church attendance) as criteria for such groups. It is likely that there are Evangelicals who remain doctrinally orthodox yet, for any number of undetermined reasons, cannot or will not go to church or read the Bible. The blind and the incapacitated, for example, are excluded by the definition. Moreover, there is no reason for what appears to be an arbitrary level of religiosity.[21]

Thus we must be cautious in interpreting this behavioral measure as a sufficient measure of religious intensity, but should instead regard it as one of several different aspects of the individual's religious spectrum.

One other measure of religiosity involves the Bible. Some people, including Hunter, have treated Biblical inerrancy as a criterion of evangelicalism. But this sort of test seems more appropriate when trying to identify fundamentalists. We asked those surveyed whether they thought the Bible was a "true" account and offered three responses which should separate Biblical literalists from other types of evangelicals.

> Think for a moment about the story of the Creation in Genesis in the Bible. Which of the following *comes closest* to your beliefs about the Creation story—
>
> (1) The story of the Creation in Genesis is *literally* true, exactly as we find it in the Bible—that is, it took exactly six days, or six twenty-four hour time periods for God to create the world.
>
> (2) The story of Creation is a true account of how God created the world.
>
> (3) The story of Creation reflects *man's* feelings about how the world may have been created.

The first and second alternatives actually are not mutually exclusive. One who believes that the Bible is "true" or inerrant could answer either (1) or (2). The instruction to respond to the alternative which "comes closest," combined with the wording of the alternatives, is likely to result in the most orthodox and fundamentalist evangelicals selecting the first alternative and the less fundamentalist evangelicals selecting the second alternative. The emphasis in the first alternative on the specifics of the Creation story, down to the number of hours in a day, should "draw" strict fundamentalists. Those evangelicals who are less religious—who do not take the Bible as the word of God but rather as a set of stories which offer ethical standards—are certain to select the third alternative.

We also sought to create a measure of fundamentalism which emphasized cultural characteristics. Some fundamentalists adopt a lifestyle which is radically different from the one adopted by most evangelicals and non-evangelicals. These fundamentalists strive for what George Marsden calls "militant separatism."[22] They do not drink, smoke, go to the movies or mix with non-fundamentalists. The methodological problems in trying to compose a question which will identify these fundamentalists in lifestyle are sizeable. Instead, we opted to identify these fundamentalists in terms of the publications they read. *Sword of the Lord* is a fundamentalist publication which we believe is generally not read by non-fundamentalists. Therefore, we hypothesized that anyone who was familiar with the publication could generally be classified as a fundamentalist.

Finally, we divided our sample on the basis of whether or not respondents were born-again. While Gabriel Fackre has argued that "'born-again Christianity' has become an important contemporary meaning of 'evangelical'," we have not assumed that the terms mean the same thing to everyone.[23] Indeed, our survey screens do not require those included in the evangelical sample to report that they are born-again. Nor is the born-again measure intended to be a necessary measure of fundamentalism, since there is no reason to assume that self-defined born-again evangelicals are likely to be more or less religious or orthodox than evangelicals who do not identify themselves as having undergone a conversion experience. Most particularly, we know that the words "born-again" may not have relevance to some Christians who in fact have undergone a conversion experience and who therefore would be considered evangelical and fundamentalist Christians. The "born-again" terms have become popular in more recent years—particularly during the Jimmy Carter years—but there are many indications that they are not universally applied by Christians to describe their religious history. We will look at born-agains as a subsample because they are an easily identifiable group which may differ from other evangelicals because of their particular religious experience, and because we want to investigate how explanatory and useful the term is.

Thus, in summary, the basic methodology of this project involved a full national random probability sample of telephone households, and completed interviews with 1,000 individuals who met a general evangelical Christian screen as described above. Within the course of the study, a variety of different religious and fundamentalist questions were asked which will be used in this study to separate out sub-groups of the broad 1,000 respondents for analysis purposes.

All interviews were completed by telephone from Tarrance & Associates Houston headquarters from July 15 to July 19, 1983. The average interview lasted approximately twenty minutes on the phone. The sample is thus self-weighting and reflects the approximate distribution of evangelicals as we have defined them throughout this country (see Table 2.1). The sample was controlled for sex to be 60% female and 40% male, based on a careful analysis of what the literature tells us about the sex of the evangelical population in this country.

Table 2.1. Geographic Distribution of Survey Sample

	Frequency	Percent
Alabama	31	3.1
Arizona	9	0.9
Arkansas	26	2.6
California	81	8.1
Colorado	9	0.9
Connecticut	4	0.4
Delaware	2	0.2
Florida	37	3.7
Georgia	46	4.6
Idaho	3	0.3
Illinois	59	5.9
Indiana	38	3.8
Iowa	11	1.1
Kansas	10	1.0
Kentucky	23	2.3
Louisiana	40	4.0
Maine	7	0.7
Maryland	11	1.1
Massachusetts	11	1.1
Michigan	41	4.1
Minnesota	12	1.2
Mississippi	14	1.4
Missouri	17	1.7
Montana	2	0.2
Nebraska	5	0.5
Nevada	2	0.2
New Jersey	16	1.6
New Mexico	4	0.4
New York	44	4.4
North Carolina	33	3.3
North Dakota	4	0.4
Ohio	57	5.7
Oklahoma	17	1.7
Oregon	11	1.1
Pennsylvania	43	4.3
Rhode Island	3	0.3
South Carolina	16	1.6
South Dakota	3	0.3
Tennessee	20	2.0
Texas	69	6.9
Utah	5	0.5
Vermont	2	0.2
Virginia	33	3.3
Washington	21	2.1
West Virginia	27	2.7
Wisconsin	19	1.9
Wyoming	2	0.2
TOTAL:	1000	100.0

Footnotes

1. Steve Bruce, "Research Note: Identifying Conservative Protestantism," *Sociological Analysis* 44 (Spring, 1983): 65.
2. For example, see "Carter Tells Evangelists that He is Born Again," *New York Times*, January 22, 1980, p. A17.
3. *Newsweek*, September 15, 1980, pp. 26-36.
4. *New York Times*, January 28, 1980, p. B5.
5. James Davison Hunter, "Operationalizing Evangelicalism: A Review, Critique & Proposal," *Sociological Analysis* 42 (Winter, 1981): 363. Also see James Davison Hunter, *American Evangelicalism: Conservative Religion and the Quandry of Modernity* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1983).
6. Helen Rose Fuchs Ebaugh and C. Allen Haney, "Church Attendance and Attitudes Toward Abortion: Differentials in Liberal and Conservative Churches," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 17 (December, 1978): 407-413.
7. Louise J. Lorentzen, "Evangelical Life Style Concerns Expressed in Political Action," *Sociological Analysis* 41 (Summer, 1980): 144-154.
8. Arthur H. Miller and Martin P. Wattenberg, "Politics from the Pulpit: Religiosity and the 1980 Elections," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 48 (Spring, 1984): 301-317.
9. Stephen D. Johnson and Joseph B. Tamney, "The Christian Right and the 1980 Presidential Election," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 21 (June, 1982): 123-131.
10. *Christianity Today* 23 (December 21, 1979): 12-13.
11. See George Gallup, Jr., "Divining the Devout: The Polls and Religious Belief," *Public Opinion* 4 (April-May, 1981): 20 and 41.
12. See Richard Quebedeaux, *The Young Evangelicals: Revolution in Orthodoxy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974); also see his *The Worldly Evangelicals* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).
13. Nancy T. Ammerman, "Comment: Operationalizing Evangelicalism: An Amendment," *Sociological Analysis* 43 (Summer, 1982): 170-171.
14. James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978): 1. For two other particularly helpful overviews of fundamentalism and the fundamentalist movement, see Louis Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1963) and Ernest Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
15. See Dinesh D'Souza, "Jerry Falwell's Renaissance," *Policy Review* (Winter, 1984): 41. Also see *Biblical Fundamentalism: Selected Messages Delivered at the 1980 World Congress of Fundamentalists* (Greenville, South Carolina: Bob Jones University Press, 1980).
16. Quebedeaux, *The Worldly Evangelicals*, p. 8.
17. See D'Souza, "Jerry Falwell's Renaissance," especially pp. 41-43.
18. David O. Moberg, "Fundamentalists and Evangelicals in Society," in David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge, *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 145.
19. Hunter, "Operationalizing Evangelicalism," p. 366.
20. Rodney Stark and Charles Y. Glock, *American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1968), p. 11.
21. Hunter, "Operationalizing Evangelicalism," p. 366.
22. George M. Marsden, "From Fundamentalism to Evangelicalism: A Historical Analysis," in David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge, *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 128.
23. Gabriel Fackre, *The Religious Right and Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), p. 6.

Chapter III
Identifying the Evangelicals

The most recent major survey of evangelicals was conducted by the Princeton Religious Research Center (an affiliate of the Gallup organization) from November 1978 through February 1979. That survey of 1,553 adult evangelicals was completed for *Christianity Today*, which published data from the study in 1979 and 1980.[1] The same data were used by James Davison Hunter in his book *American Evangelicalism*.[2]

Hunter and *Christianity Today* employed different definitions from the ones used in the present study. It is not surprising to find that the definitions dramatically affect the nature of the samples. In his *American Evangelicalism*, Hunter defines an evangelical as

> a Protestant who attests to the inerrancy of Scripture and the divinity of Christ and either (1) believes that Jesus Christ is the only hope for salvation or (2) has had a religious experience—that is, a particularly powerful religious insight or awakening that is still important in his everyday life, that involved a conversion to Jesus Christ as his personal savior or (3) both (1) and (2).[3]

Christianity Today, as noted in Chapter II, divides their evangelical sample into "orthodox" evangelicals and "conversionalist" evangelicals. But they do not always distinguish between the two groups, noting that on most issues "the two groups are so closely in agreement that we found it practical to speak of 'evangelicals' as a single unified group." Orthodox evangelicals believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God, that the Bible is not in error and that entrance to heaven depends on personal faith in Jesus. They also read the Bible and attend religious services at least once each month. Conversionalist evangelicals, on the other hand, have had a born-again experience, read the Bible and attend religious services at least once each month.

Our definition requires only a belief that Jesus was a real person who was also the "unique Son of God" and *either* a belief that a person needs to accept Jesus as savior in order to have eternal salvation *or* a report that he or she had a conversion (born-again) experience. While 96.5% of evangelical respondents in our survey agree that a person must accept Jesus "as his or her savior in order to have eternal salvation," only 57.8% indicate that they have had a born-again experience. Our assumption is that *self-identification* as "born-again" is not a necessary condition for classification as an evangelical (as discussed in Chapter II). Thus a key distinction between our sample and the *Christianity Today*/Gallup samples is their "born-again" requirement. A large majority of evangelicals as defined in the present study did not self-identify themselves as having undergone a "born-again" experience.

One advantage of the methodology used in this study is our ability to examine subsamples within the overall evangelical sample in order to investigate empirically the differences between those who profess a born-again experience and those who do not. Born-again evangelicals tend to be older (sixty-five years of age and up), have less education (68.9% of those without a high school degree are born-again) and have a lower family income (three-quarters of those making under $10,000 per year say that they are born-again, while only 52.3% of those making over $20,000 per year say that they are born-again). While 67% of blacks say they are born-again, only 57% of whites say that they have had a conversion experience. Born-agains are also slightly more Southern than evangelicals as a whole, with a majority (53.1%) of born-agains coming from the South and a minority (44.5%) of all evangelicals coming from the same region. Religious affiliation is an important factor in separating the born-again and non-born-again. Two-thirds of Protestant evangelicals say that they are born-again, but only 29% of Catholic evangelicals indicate that they have had a conversion experience. (Still, it may surprise some to learn that more than one-quarter of our Catholic respondents say they are born-again, a phenomenon usually associated with Protestantism.[4])

Our data indicate quite clearly that the more religious the evangelical, the more likely he or she has had a "born-again" experience. An overwhelming 84.7% of those who attend religious services several times each week consider themselves to be born-again, while only 52.5% of those who attend between once each week and once each month say they have had a conversion experience. Less than half of evangelicals who seldom or never attend church are born-again. Similarly, while three-quarters of those who say religion is "extremely important" in their daily lives are born-again, only half of those who say religion is "very important" are born-again. The same holds true for Biblical literalists. Those who believe the Bible word-for-word are much more likely to be born-again than are those who say that the Bible reflects man's feelings. Self-described fundamentalists are more likely to be born-again than are non-fundamentalists, and those aware of the fundamentalist publication *Sword of the Lord* are also more likely to have had a conversion experience.

All of this reinforces the importance of definitional considerations in identifying the evangelical population in this country. It is a fundamental assumption of this study that self-definition as having undergone a "born-again" experience is not a necessary requirement for an individual to be considered an evangelical Christian. We do note that the more fundamentalist an individual is on a variety of measures, the more likely he or she is to report a born-again experience. On the other hand, we note there is not a one-to-one correspondence between self-reported born-again status and other measures of intensity of religious beliefs. Use of the "born-again" criterion, in other words, would *exclude* individuals who on other measures would be considered extremely religious (and extremely fundamentalist). We will at various times in this analysis point out the distinctions between the more "hard core" subsamples who are most fundamentalist on various measures and the broader sample of evangelicals as we have defined them.

Gender

The gender composition of this sample was controlled to be 60% female and 40% male. These figures were based on a careful analysis of the existing literature on the sex composition of the intensely religious and fundamentalist groups in this country. For a number of subsamples of religious evangelicals within this study the ratio of women-to-men is even higher than for the total evangelical sample. However, in one subsample, self-defined fundamentalists, there are equal numbers of men and women. This is surprising, since no other sample showed a similar distribution of men and women. There is no easy explanation for the difference. Since the survey did not define the term "fundamentalist," each respondent classified himself according to his own understanding of the term. Apparently, men are proportionately more willing to label themselves as fundamentalists, while women are not.

Education

While three-quarters of *Christianity Today*'s evangelical sample has never attended college, a slight majority of our evangelical respondents has at least some college experience. Our sample has a slightly higher percentage of respondents who have less than a high school education and a slightly lower percentage of respondents who have completed college or attended graduate school than has the public at large. However, our sample mirrors national samples for high school graduates and those with some college. The *Christianity Today* sample is *much* less educated than either our sample or the general public. There are two non-definitional (or methodological) explanations for this difference in education within the two samples. First, the *Christianity Today* sample was completed four and one-half years before the current sample. The American population of eighteen years of age and older is becoming progres-

Table 3.1 Evangelical Profiles

	All Adults VLT[1]	Reg. Voters VLT[2]	C.T.[3]	Bureau of Census	Evangelicals	Fundamentalists	Biblical Literalists	Born-Agains	Attend Church "Several Times Each Week"	Religion "Extremely Important"	Catholics	Baptists	High-Status Denom.	Conserv. Denom.	Methodists	Lutherans
Sex																
Men			40.1		39.9	50.3	36.8	38.8	35.2	36.2	39.0	42.0	38.5	36.5	39.2	40.0
Women			59.9		60.1	49.8	63.2	61.3	64.8	63.8	61.0	58.0	61.5	63.5	60.8	60.0
Race																
Black	8		11.8		9.7											
White	86		88.2		87.1											
Other	6				3.2											
Education																
No High School Degree	10	10	37.5		16.1	13.2	22.5	19.2	14.8	19.4	14.7	21.2	10.8	19.7	13.3	18.5
High School Grad	33	32	38.3		33.0	36.0	39.3	33.2	33.7	29.3	29.8	36.9	12.3	43.8	32.5	23.1
Some College	30	29	15.3		29.2	27.4	25.9	27.2	32.7	30.0	30.7	26.3	40.0	19.0	28.3	33.9
College Grad	} 27	} 29	} 8.9		14.5	14.7	7.7	13.2	11.2	12.9	16.1	11.7	23.1	12.4	17.5	15.4
Graduate School					7.2	8.6	4.7	7.3	7.7	8.4	8.7	4.0	13.9	5.1	8.3	9.2
Total Family Income																
Under $10,000	12		} 37*		8.5	6.6	12.8	11.1	9.2	10.2	6.0	11.3	9.2	9.5	10.8	3.1
$10,000-$19,999	24				24.4	21.8	27.2	27.7	26.0	26.1	28.0	26.6	13.9	25.6	15.8	18.5
$20,000-$29,999	26				25.3	26.9	24.0	21.8	26.0	22.3	20.6	24.8	30.8	28.5	28.3	30.8
$30,000-$39,999	15		} 7.1*		17.4	19.8	15.6	16.1	13.3	14.6	18.8	17.2	21.5	13.9	16.7	21.5
$40,000 or more	17				15.4	17.3	11.6	14.7	14.8	15.4	16.5	12.4	18.5	11.7	19.2	16.9
Refused	6				9.0	7.6	8.9	8.7	10.7	11.4	10.1	7.7	6.2	11.0	9.2	9.2
Age																
18-24	14	10	27.1	16.7	11.6	11.2	10.4	10.6	7.1	8.7	13.3	15.7	4.6	6.6	9.2	7.7
25-34	26	21		}41.5	22.2	27.4	17.8	20.1	23.0	18.9	25.2	20.1	23.1	27.0	15.8	21.5
35-44	21	23	26.5		18.7	24.4	15.3	18.9	18.9	17.9	17.4	17.5	16.9	22.6	19.2	21.5
45-54	14	17		}25.6	14.1	12.7	15.1	15.2	14.8	14.6	14.7	11.3	16.9	18.3	11.7	13.9
55-64	13	16	24.8		15.6	13.2	19.0	15.2	15.8	18.6	16.5	13.5	16.9	11.7	21.7	20.0
65+	11	13	21.6	16.2	16.8	11.2	21.0	19.2	18.4	20.4	11.9	20.8	21.5	12.4	22.5	15.4

Occupation															
Upper White-Collar		20.4**		24.6	22.8	18.8	23.7	24.5	22.8	30.3	17.9	30.8	19.7	21.7	29.2
Lower White-Collar		6.5		10.8	12.2	8.9	9.4	12.8	11.9	12.8	9.9	9.2	13.1	10.0	13.9
Upper Blue-Collar		30.5		22.4	28.9	24.0	22.7	20.4	21.1	20.2	21.9	13.9	27.0	24.2	24.6
Lower Blue-Collar		10.9		11.7	12.7	12.6	11.1	10.2	10.4	10.6	15.0	4.6	13.1	6.7	9.2
Retired		28.7		21.1	11.9	24.9	22.5	21.9	24.8	17.9	24.5	30.8	16.8	28.3	13.9
Not in Labor Force				9.4	10.7	10.9	10.7	10.2	8.9	8.3	11.0	10.8	10.2	9.2	9.2
Usual Vote															
Republican	32			32.3	36.6	27.7	32.9	28.6	30.8	30.7	25.6	41.5	35.0	35.0	44.6
Ticket-Splitter	20			20.6	19.3	22.2	19.9	19.9	21.6	21.1	16.8	20.0	24.8	20.0	15.4
Democrat	43			47.1	44.2	50.1	47.2	51.5	47.6	48.2	57.7	38.5	40.2	45.0	40.0
Geography															
New England/Mid Atlantic		16.1	22	13.0	12.2	11.9	8.8	7.7	12.9	30.3	4.7	18.5	6.6	7.5	9.2
East/North Central		26.2	18	21.4	20.3	18.8	17.7	15.3	16.4	27.5	10.6	13.9	24.8	31.7	36.9
West/North Central			8	6.2	5.6	6.2	5.5	3.6	5.2	6.4	3.3	4.6	8.0	6.7	18.5
South Atlantic			16	20.5	23.4	23.2	24.4	27.6	22.3	7.8	31.4	27.7	18.3	22.5	9.2
East/South Central		45.0	6	8.8	11.2	12.6	11.4	13.8	8.7	3.7	15.7	4.6	12.4	10.8	0.0
West/South Central			10	15.2	14.2	16.5	17.3	16.8	17.6	11.9	26.6	7.7	15.3	11.7	7.7
Mountain/Pacific		12.7	19	14.9	13.2	10.9	14.9	15.3	16.9	12.4	7.7	23.1	14.6	9.2	18.5

Key: VLT[1]—Nationwide Tarrance survey conducted for a private client in January, 1983. Adult respondents.
VLT[2]—Nationwide Tarrance survey conducted for a private client in January, 1983. Registered voters only.
CT—*Christianity Today* survey, November 1978-February 1979, as cited in James Davison Hunter, *American Evangelicalism*, Chapter 4.

*estimates

**occupation of chief wage earner

sively better educated from year to year as the proportion of younger, "baby-boom" individuals increases in the population. Thus, *any* survey done in 1978-1979 would have a less well educated adult population than would the same survey completed in 1983. Second, the Gallup survey was completed with in-home interviews. Methodologically, in-home interviews have historically produced a more downscale (i.e., lower income, less educated) sample than have telephone interviews, for several reasons. One of the more important, of course, is that in-home interviews include the very downscale homes which may not have telephones. There is also a tendency for respondents to be somewhat more honest about their educational attainments to an in-person interviewer than to an interviewer on the telephone.

It is important to note that those evangelical Christians who believe that the Bible is literally true are significantly less well educated than those who do not. Over 60% of Biblical literalists (as defined in this study) have only a high school education, compared with 49% of the total evangelical sample and 32% of those who believe that the Bible represents man's feeling. There is an inverse relationship, in other words, between level of educational attainment and belief in a literal Bible. Thus, any evangelical sample which requires that individuals profess a belief in a literally true Bible will exclude significant numbers of better educated Christians who otherwise meet evangelical criteria. This is one reason that we made the decision *not* to employ a literalist screen, and helps explain why studies which use the literalist criterion would include a significantly larger percentage of less well educated Christians than would the present project.

Our data confirm that in this country there are significant differences in socioeconomic status among Protestant denominations and between some denominations and Catholics. The high-status denominations were so named in the present study because of this demographic fact. Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and other similar denominations are significantly more likely to be composed of Christians with college educations than are other Protestant denominations. Baptists and the low-status denominations are significantly lower in average educational attainment. (See Appendix I for a listing and categorization of denominations.)

But if it is understandable that these sorts of subsamples would differ from the overall evangelical universe, it is a bit surprising that self-described fundamentalists show little difference from the other evangelicals. In fact, self-defined fundamentalists are, if anything, slightly better educated than are evangelicals as a whole. This is difficult to understand, since those evangelicals who exhibit traditionally fundamentalist behavior (by attending church several times each week or by being strict Biblical literalists) have much lower levels of formal education than do self-described evangelicals. This would have led us to assume that self-described fundamentalists also have less formal education.

We find that there is not a strong relationship between self-defined fundamentalism and belief in an inerrant Bible. In fact, 54% of Christians in this study who identified themselves as fundamentalist do *not* agree with the strict interpretation of the Bible. Similarly, 52% of born-again Christians, 55% of those who are familiar with the strict fundamentalist publication *Sword of the Lord*, and 52% of those for whom religion is very important in their daily life also report not believing in a strict, literal interpretation of the Bible. Thus, as we have already noted, any study which includes a literalist interpretation of the Bible as a screen question for defining evangelical or fundamentalist Christians is—in our opinion—limiting the so-defined group on the basis of what may in reality be an *educational* bias, and thus creates a false impression and analysis of this group of Christians in this country. While investigating the characteristics and attitudes of those who believe in a literal Bible may have interesting sociological implications and may be a topic of interest in and of itself, it is apparently not providing a realistic portrait of those Christians in this country who may in fact be evangelicals.

Total Family Income

Since evangelicals have a slightly lower level of education than the general population in this country, it would not be surprising to find them with slightly lower incomes as well. In actuality, our evangelical sample mirrors a January 1984 Lance Tarrance nationwide survey of adults (see Table 3.1). Our data thus suggest that there is no reason to believe that there is a major income disparity between evangelicals and the country as a whole.

Once again, we find a marked difference in the income figures produced in the *Christianity Today* study and used by Hunter and in our survey of evangelicals. *Christianity Today* found that 62.5% of evangelicals came from households with an income under $15,000 a year, while only 7.1% had an income over $25,000 a year. Our survey finds evangelicals *much* better off financially, with only 32.9% coming from families with a total income under $20,000 a year and 32.8% coming from families with an income of at least $30,000 a year. The reasons for these differences are the same as those discussed above when we considered education, revolving around the four year time difference in the two studies, differences in study methodology, and the critical differences in the definitional criteria used in creating the samples.

Earlier, we noted that three subsamples—Biblical literalists, Baptists and conservative denomination evangelicals—have lower educational levels than do our sample of 1,000 respondents. The same three subsamples rank lowest in terms of total family income, with 25.6% of conservative denomination evangelicals, 27.2% of Biblical literalists and 29.6% of Baptists having incomes of $30,000 a year or more. By contrast, high-status evangelical denomination members, Methodists and Lutherans come from families with particularly high family incomes. Two other subsamples—Catholics and fundamentalists—also come from families with incomes *above* the total evangelical sample. As was the case with education, self-described fundamentalists prove to be much different from Biblical literalists and those respondents who say they attend religious services several times each week. Respondents who choose the fundamentalist label come from higher income families than do those evangelicals who exhibit what we would normally think of as being fundamentalist behavior and beliefs on other measures. Apparently, fewer downscale evangelicals actually select the fundamentalist label.

Age

Christianity Today found that 21.6% of evangelicals are sixty-five years of age or older, while only 27.1% range between eighteen and thirty-four years. Such figures would not surprise those people who assume that religiosity is related to age. But our data indicate quite clearly that evangelicals as a whole are *not* dramatically different from other adults. A sizable 33.8% of our sample ranged between eighteen and thirty-four years, while only 16.8% of our sample was sixty-five years of age or older. Our sample has fewer respondents between thirty-five and fifty-four than did a nationwide Tarrance survey of *registered voters*, but when our sample is compared with both of Tarrance's other surveys and census data, it is clear that evangelicals are not radically different in terms of age distribution from Americans at large.

Among the subgroups, both Biblical literalists and those evangelicals who say religion is extremely important in their daily lives are measurably older than evangelicals in general. For example, 40% of Biblical literalists are fifty-five years of age or older, but only 32.4% of all evangelicals fall into the same age category. Born-agains are slightly older than most evangelicals. High-status evangelicals differ dramatically from Biblical literalists and from the most religious in terms of education and income. But this is not the case with age. High-status evangelicals are older than every denominational group except Methodists. A substantial 44.2% of Methodists are fifty-five or older, and 38.4% of high-status evangelicals fall into the same age group. The relatively older composition of Methodists and high-status evangelicals may be explained by the phenomenon of religious switching, wherein members of low-status denominations switch to higher status denominations as they themselves move up the socioeconomic ladder.[5] Higher status individuals in this country also tend to have lower fertility rates. Thus, members of the high-status Protestant denominations in general have fewer children than do members of lower status denominations and Catholics. Demographically, this means that the high-status denominations do not replace themselves with internal reproduction at the same rate as do the lower status denominations and Catholics. In other words, since children tend to adopt the religion of their parents, and since high-status denominations have fewer children, then high-status denominations will have a higher average age at any given point in time than will those denominations whose members have lots of children. These same behavioral patterns also help explain the fact that some lower status denominations (such as Baptists) are actually gaining members in an absolute sense from year to year *despite* the fact that they have more adults who switch out of their religion than they have joining their religion.[6]

Two other interesting points should be noted. First, Baptists were overrepresented in two age groups—the very young (eighteen to twenty-four) and the very old (over sixty-five years of age). Second, a number of groups, particularly high-status evangelicals, Methodists, Lutherans, conservative denomination evangelicals, those who attend church several times each week and those who say religion is extremely important, had relatively small percentages of respondents in the youngest age category.

Occupation

Our survey finds more than one-third of all evangelicals to have white-collar jobs. By contrast, *Christianity Today* found only about one-quarter of evangelicals holding white-collar positions. The magazine study also found 28.7% of evangelicals to be retired, while our study finds barely one-fifth of respondents fitting into the same category. Both of these differences are consistent with other differences between the samples. In general, the *Christianity Today* sample recorded a population which was older, less educated and poorer. Given that profile, it is not surprising that many of the respondents in the *Christianity Today* study would also be either retired or blue-collar, and that our younger, better educated and financially well-off sample would also be more likely to occupy higher status (and higher paying jobs).

Predictably, Biblical literalists and Baptists are the least likely of the evangelical subsamples to have less than one-fifth of their respondents holding upper white-collar positions. Lutherans, high-status evangelicals and most of all Catholic evangelicals are more white collar than are the average evangelical.

Geographic Distribution

The classic characterization of an evangelical includes the fact that he is likely to be from the South. The *Christianity Today* sample was almost one-half (45%) Southern, with another one-quarter of respondents coming from the Middle West. Our survey produced a sample distributed in a very similar way, with 44.5% coming from the South and another 27.6% coming from the Middle West. However, significant differences appeared in subsamples, with even heavier concentrations of Southerners among Biblical literalists (52.3%), born-again (53.1%) and those evangelicals who say that they attend religious services several times each week (58.2%). Among Baptist evangelicals, almost three-quarters (73.7%) come from the South. (Perhaps not surprising, given that the largest Baptist denomination in this country—with 14 million adherents—is the Southern Baptist Convention.)

But some evangelical subsamples do not show the heavy concentration in the South. Catholic evangelicals come heavily from the Northeastern states and from the Midwest. High-status denomination evangelicals come disproportionately from the New England and Mid-Atlantic states (18.5%) and from the Mountain and Pacific states (23.1%), while Methodists and Lutherans come primarily from the Middle West.

Comparing the Samples: A Summary

In general, evangelicals as we have defined them in this study prove to be more female, slightly less educated and more Southern and Midwestern than the population as a whole.[7] They also have very slightly lower family incomes and lower status occupations, though in both cases the differences are slight. There were no noticeable age differences between evangelicals and adults in general. This general characterization of evangelicals is in many ways different than the normal portrayal of evangelicals as older and "lower class." However, we do find substantial differences between evangelicals and particular evangelical subsamples. For example, Biblical literalists are slightly more female than evangelicals, but more importantly, they occupy a *much lower socioeconomic position*. Baptists and conservative denomination evangelicals are also at the low end of the socioeconomic ladder.

Self-described fundamentalists differ significantly from those evangelicals who behave like fundamentalists. That is, we assume that those respondents who attend church several times each week and who are classified as strict Biblical literalists should be included under the general heading of fundamentalists. We also assume that those who say that religion is extremely important in their daily lives are more likely to be fundamentalists. Respondents in the subsamples tend to be female and lower socioeconomically. Many of them also tend to be from the South. Self-described fundamentalists, on the other hand, are much more upscale in terms of education, occupation and income than are other subsamples. And self-described fundamentalists are more male.

In a number of ways, Catholics included in the evangelical sample differ from many of the Protestant respondents. In terms of education, income and occupation, Catholics resemble Methodists or Lutherans rather than the more plentiful Baptists or conservative denomination respondents. In a sense, they are more "mainline." Not surprisingly, they are the least Southern of any of the denominations, and they are concentrated heavily in the Northeast and upper Midwest.

High-status evangelicals have a demographic profile which is significantly different from many evangelicals. They tend to be wealthier, more educated and more white-collar. A large 23.1% come from the West, though a sizable minority also come from the Northeast. They also tend to be older than the average evangelical.

From a purely demographic point of view, it is clear that, as David Moberg has written, "evangelicalism is a broad social movement, not a monolithic, homogeneous group."[8] Our total sample does not differ radically from the country's population as a whole, although there are instances where there are differences. Certain of our subsamples, however, show substantial differences from one another and from the general population.

These data demonstrate the remarkably important impact of one's definition of evangelical or fundamentalist in dealing with these religious sub-groups. Any study which excludes Catholics and includes only Biblical literalists will by its very nature have a more Southern, more downscale, older group of Christians than will a study similar to the present one. In other words, a scholar or other investigator can *create* a sample of evangelical Christians in this country who are distinctly different from other Christians simply by tailoring his definition.

Many scholars who use these restrictive definitions firmly believe that they are the most appropriate definition of the evangelical Christian in this country, and have defended their positions in their studies. In the current study, however, we have chosen to employ a somewhat less restrictive criteria for inclusion as an evangelical—one which meets most general, agreed-upon standards for evangelical status, but one which does not include more restrictive criteria such as Biblical literalism, which may reflect cultural and educational factors more than true religiosity. The advantage of an approach, of course, is inherent in the latitude it provides us in examining various measures. We can study and examine the differences that the measures themselves make in defining individuals and in studying the relationships between measures of religiosity and the political variables which form the purpose of this study.

Policy Priorities

One very basic way to understand evangelicals is to examine their priorities and concerns. This can be done through an open-ended survey research question which asks respondents to mention important problems or concerns. We asked our sample of 1,000 evangelicals:

> Suppose you had a chance to talk with your U.S. congressman or senator. What are one or two of the most important things you would tell him—that is, what are the one or two things you would most want your congressman or senator to do or change?

The responses to this question indicate that evangelicals have great concern about a range of subjects normally thrown together under the general heading of "social issues." School prayer is the most frequently mentioned response, but evangelicals are also concerned about abortion, preserving religion and "cleaning up" magazines and television. After social issues, evangelicals demonstrate concern about the economy. "Help the unemployed" is the second most popular response after prayer in schools, and other economic responses, such

Table 3.2. Issues of Importance to Evangelicals

	MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO CHANGE (Specific issues)	
1.	Prayer in School	9.7%
2.	Help Unemployed	7.4
3.	Abortion	6.3
4.	Taxation	6.0
5.	Moral/Social Issues	3.6
6.	Nuclear Arms/War	3.3
	Economy	
8.	Education/Schools	2.9
9.	Reform Welfare	2.7
10.	Religious influence	2.6
	MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO CHANGE (General categories)	
1.	Social Issues	23.9%
2.	Economy	19.2
3.	Foreign Policy	8.0
4.	Crime	4.1
	Help Needy	
6.	Honesty/Integrity/Clean up D.C.	3.8
7.	Schools/Education	3.7
8.	Reform Welfare	2.7
9.	Environment	0.6
10.	Don't Know/Nothing	21.3
11.	Other	8.6

as "cut government spending," "taxes," and "the budget," are also common. Behind social issues and the economy is foreign policy. It is a distant third. Only eight percent of our sample mention foreign policy concerns, with 6.5% expressing concern about nuclear weapons, war and foreign involvement and 1.5% saying that there should be more support for the military (e.g., increase defense spending).

Other issues such as crime (including concern about drugs, alcohol and punishment), benefits for the needy, honesty and integrity in Washington, and the environment appear much more infrequently. Slightly over one-fifth of the total sample (21.3%) say that they do not know what they would say or would say nothing.

Two years ago, a similar study of ethnic Catholics produced a sample which was concerned primarily about the economy and secondarily about foreign policy (and particularly the threat of nuclear war).[9] Obviously, the timing of that survey in the midst of a major economic recession had a great deal to do with the type of responses. But our survey of evangelicals, which took place during the summer of 1983, also took place during a relatively difficult economic period, before the marked gains of late 1983 and the generally brighter economic picture of 1984. Thus, the difference in the responses from the evangelical respondents may reflect more than existing economic conditions and outlooks.

We also note that there are methodological and contextual reasons which may explain our evangelical sample's greater tendency to name explicitly religious problems in response to the open-ended question. Respondents in this survey were told initially that the study was about religion and religious issues, and these respondents were asked a series of questions about their religious beliefs in order to establish their evangelical or fundamentalist status. Thus, by the time the respondent was asked in an open-ended fashion to describe the major problem in this country, it had been made clear to him or her that the study was religious in nature. Respondents may thus have searched for a religiously related problem in response to the question in order to attempt to be "in tune with" the context of the survey.

Footnotes

1. See "Christianity Today/Gallup Poll: An Overview," *Christianity Today* 23 (December 21, 1979): 12-19.

2. James Davison Hunter, *American Evangelicalism: Conservative Religion and the Quandry of Modernity* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1983). The *Christianity Today* figures which follow come from Chapter 4 (A Demographic Profile) of Hunter's book.

3. Ibid., p. 141.

4. As noted in Chapter II, many authorities define evangelicalism as a Protestant movement and therefore eliminate Catholics from the movement. Hunter, for example, argues that while there is "a small contingent" of Catholics "who hold to the general Evangelical theological orientation," they "must be regarded as something other than true evangelicals." Hunter, *American Evangelicalism*, pp. 139-140.

5. For a discussion of religious switching, see Frank Newport, "The Religious Switcher in the United States," *American Sociological Review* 44 (August, 1979): 528-552.

6. See Ibid.

7. We have not tried to compare evangelicals to non-evangelicals, but rather, to the country as a whole. This is largely due to the lack of data about non-evangelicals. However, Hunter does compare evangelicals to various categories of non-evangelicals.

8. David O. Moberg, "Fundamentalists and Evangelicals in Society," in David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge, *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 149.

9. Stuart Rothenberg and Eric Licht, with Frank Newport, *Ethnic Voters and National Issues: Coalitions in the 1980's* (Washington D.C.: Free Congress Research and Education Foundation, 1982).

SECTION 2

Evangelicals and the Issues

Chapter IV
Foreign Policy Issues

Three of the most controversial and widely discussed foreign policy and defense issues during the early-to-middle 1980's involved a proposed freeze on nuclear weapons, levels of defense spending and American involvement in Central America. We asked our sample of 1000 evangelicals about each of these questions.

Nuclear Freeze

The total evangelical sample is split almost evenly between those favoring a freeze on Soviet and American nuclear weapon levels "even if that means the U.S. has slightly fewer weapons" and those opposing such a freeze. The difference between supporters and opponents is less than five percentage points, well within the survey's margin of error. These results differ from the findings of an earlier survey conducted by the Gallup organization for the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) during the period May 13-16, 1983. The Gallup/NAE survey found 60% of evangelicals in favor of the freeze and a mere 18% opposed. The differences in the results of that survey as compared to ours probably can be traced to the different wording of the survey questions, rather than to any major change in evangelical attitudes on the subject of nuclear weapons. Our survey asked evangelicals their opinions of a freeze *if the United States were at a slight numerical disadvantage*, while the Gallup/NAE survey asked only about "an immediate, verifiable nuclear freeze in the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons." Given the scenario which we employed (with the United States at numerical disadvantage), it is not surprising that there would be greater reluctance to accept a freeze.

Respondents 18-24 years old favor a freeze 54%-33%, while respondents 45-55 years of age narrowly oppose a freeze. However, all other age groups favor a freeze by rather small margins. Interestingly, almost one-third of respondents over 65 years old and exactly one-quarter of those 55-64 years old are undecided. Since far fewer young evangelicals exhibit the same sort of uncertainty, the nuclear freeze is apparently either a less salient or more complex issue to older evangelicals. (Educational levels are inversely related to age in this sample, we remember, and less well educated respondents typically are less likely to have opinions on complicated issues.)

Geography, education and gender do not have a significant relationship to position on the nuclear freeze. In addition, the narrow margin of support for the freeze appears in all income groups except respondents earning over $40,000 per year. This higher income group *opposes* the freeze 50.0%-36.4%, with a particularly high 35.7% displaying not simple opposition but "strong" opposition to the freeze. White-collar evangelicals also tend to oppose the freeze, while blue-collar respondents tend to favor it.

Table 4.1. Nuclear Freeze

"Do you favor or oppose a freeze on U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons at current levels, even if it means that the U.S. has slightly fewer weapons?"

	Yes	No	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**42.8%**	**37.9%**	**19.3%**	**1000**
Age				
18-24	54.3	33.6	12.1	116
25-34	48.7	37.8	13.5	222
35-44	43.9	41.7	14.4	187
45-54	38.3	44.0	17.7	141
55-64	39.1	35.9	25.0	156
65+	35.1	32.7	32.1	168
No Answer	10.0	50.0	40.0	10
Occupation				
Upper White-Collar	38.6	45.1	16.3	246
Lower White-Collar	38.0	43.5	18.5	108
Upper Blue-Collar	47.3	35.7	17.0	224
Lower Blue-Collar	53.9	35.0	11.1	117
Retired	40.8	32.2	27.0	211
Not in Labor Force	39.4	34.0	26.6	94
Race				
Black	50.5	29.9	19.6	97
White	41.2	39.2	19.6	871
Other	62.5	28.1	9.4	32
Religion				
Protestant	39.3	38.9	21.8	669
Catholic	53.9	34.4	11.7	230
Other	40.6	39.6	19.8	101

	Yes	No	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	42.8%	37.9%	19.3%	1000
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	41.5	35.1	23.5	405
True Account	42.7	38.1	19.2	370
Man's Feelings	47.8	42.8	9.4	180
Don't Know	35.6	42.2	22.2	45
Fundamentalist?				
Yes	42.6	43.2	14.2	197
No	44.2	36.8	19.0	649
Unsure	37.0	35.7	27.3	154
Sword of the Lord I.D.?				
Heard of	42.8	38.7	18.5	173
Never Heard of	42.8	37.7	19.5	827
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	40.7	38.5	20.8	403
Very	43.2	37.4	19.4	396
Somewhat	46.3	37.8	15.9	201
Born-Again?				
Yes	39.6	38.2	22.2	578
No	47.2	37.4	15.4	422
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	36.2	35.7	28.1	196
Once per Week	43.2	37.5	19.3	440
Nearly every Week	46.4	41.6	12.1	166
Once per Month	43.1	43.1	13.9	72
Seldom/Never	46.8	34.9	18.3	126
Denomination				
Baptist	38.3	39.4	22.3	274
Methodist	41.7	35.0	23.3	120
Lutheran	50.8	38.5	10.8	65
High-Status Denom.	40.0	43.1	16.9	65
Conservative Denom.	31.4	46.0	22.6	137
Catholic	54.1	35.3	10.6	218
Other Denom.	46.6	36.2	17.2	58
None Specified	41.3	23.8	34.9	63

Total Family Income	**Yes, strongly***	**Yes**	**No**	**No, strongly***	**n =**
Under $10,000	34.1%	9.4%	8.2%	15.3%	85
$10,000-$19,999	31.6	10.7	12.3	22.1	244
$20,000-$29,999	30.4	14.2	14.2	23.7	253
$30,000-$39,999	33.9	14.9	12.6	29.3	174
$40,000+	24.0	12.3	14.3	35.7	154
Refused	25.6	12.2	13.3	18.9	90

* We have chosen to break out those who feel "strongly" for and against this issue on this variable because *intensity* seems to be an important element of the responses. Whenever necessary, we will do so for other questions. When differences of intensity do not appear to be important, we will combine those who feel strongly about their responses with those who do not.

Race and religion are important explanatory variables. Whites split virtually evenly on the freeze (41.2% yes, 39.1% no), while blacks support a freeze by more than twenty percentage points (50.5% in favor, 29.9% opposed). Similarly, while Protestant evangelicals split on the freeze (39.3% in favor, 38.9% opposed), Catholic evangelicals show a decisive 53.9%-34.4% preference for the freeze. It is important to note, however, that one Protestant group—Lutherans—favors the freeze by a 51%-39% margin.

Not surprisingly, the ideology and party of the evangelicals in our sample relate to their position on a nuclear freeze. Conservative Republicans oppose a freeze, while all types of Democrats, including *conservative* Democratic evangelicals, favor it. Ticket-splitting evangelicals also show an aversion to the freeze, putting them closer to the Republicans than Democrats on this issue.

We find relatively few relationships among our measures of religiosity and fundamentalism and positions on this issue. Biblical literalists are no different than those who believe that the story of Creation in the Bible "reflects man's feelings" when it comes to a nuclear freeze. Both favor it. Self-described fundamentalists are less supportive of the freeze than non-fundamentalists, but the difference between the two groups is not striking. Similarly, respondents who are aware of the fundamentalist publication *Sword of The Lord* are no different on the freeze than those who have not heard of that publication, and there is not a great difference among evangelicals who say religion is "extremely important" and those who say it is "very important" or only "somewhat important" in their daily lives. Born-again evangelicals are less supportive of the freeze (39.6% yes, 38.2% no) than are evangelicals who are not born-again (47.2% yes, 37.4% no), and those evangelicals who attend religious services "several times a week" are less supportive of a freeze than other evangelicals, particularly those who "seldom or never" attend services. But these differences are not extraordinary.

In summary, we find that the most significant religious variable is religious preference. Catholics and Lutherans support a freeze by large margins (twelve to twenty percentage points), while high-status denominations and Baptists are split on the issue. What these data suggest is that the Catholic and Lutheran preference for a nuclear freeze is not directly related to the relative fundamentalism of these denominations—since our measures of fundamentalism do not have a direct relationship to position on this issue. Additionally, in our evangelical sample, Catholics and Lutherans are not strongly disproportionately composed of a particular political group (as classified by party leaning and ideology). Thus, we conclude that members of these denominations for an independent reason have developed attitudes favorable to the freeze, and that these reasons are apparently independent of the political or fundamentalist composition of these groups. (Chapter VII will develop the investigation of these independent effects on issue stance in a somewhat different manner.)

Since we have no nationwide data on the freeze using a question comparable to the one we composed, we cannot directly compare evangelicals to non-evangelicals. However, the Gallup/NAE survey produced evangelical responses similar to those of the general public (evangelicals in favor 60%-18%; non-evangelicals in favor 75%-16%).

Defense Spending

When asked whether the United States should increase or decrease the amount of money spent on defense, a narrow 39.3%-33.4% plurality of evangelicals support greater defense spending. However, this difference is within the survey's margin of error, and a large 27.3% of respondents have no opinion on this issue.

Support for increased defense spending is greatest throughout the South, with opposition particularly strong in the north central states (roughly from Ohio in the east to Nebraska in the west and from the states bordering Canada in the north to Kansas and Missouri in the south). Respondents also split on the basis of family income, with higher income families more supportive of

Table 4.2. Defense Spending

"Do you feel the U.S. should increase the amount of money we spend on defense, or should we decrease this amount of money?"

	Increase	Decrease	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**39.3%**	**33.4%**	**27.3%**	**1000**
By Region				
New England/Mid-Atlantic	36.2	30.8	33.1	130
East/North Central	33.6	40.7	25.7	214
West/North Central	29.0	48.4	22.6	62
South Atlantic	43.4	26.8	29.8	205
East/South Central	44.3	31.8	23.9	88
West/South Central	46.7	27.6	25.7	152
Mountain/Pacific	38.3	34.9	26.9	149
Total Family Income				
Under $10,000	31.8	37.7	30.6	85
$10,000-$19,999	34.0	34.4	31.6	244
$20,000-$29,999	38.3	36.8	24.9	253
$30,000-$39,999	47.7	31.6	20.7	174
$40,000 +	45.5	31.2	23.4	154
Refused	36.7	24.4	38.9	90
Occupation				
Upper White-Collar	35.8	39.0	25.2	246
Lower White-Collar	39.8	31.5	28.7	108
Upper Blue-Collar	44.6	31.3	24.1	224

All Respondents	**Increase** **39.3%**	**Decrease** **33.4%**	**Unsure** **27.3%**	**n =** **1000**
By Region				
Lower Blue-Collar	42.7	30.8	26.5	117
Retired	37.9	29.9	32.2	211
Not In Labor Force	34.0	37.2	28.7	94
Race				
Black	27.8	47.2	24.7	97
White	40.9	31.2	27.9	871
Other	31.3	50.0	18.8	32
Denomination				
Baptist	44.2	31.8	24.1	274
Methodist	44.2	28.3	27.5	120
Lutheran	29.2	46.2	24.6	65
High-Status Denom.	44.6	21.5	33.9	65
Conservative Denom.	48.2	20.4	31.4	137
Catholic	31.2	42.2	26.6	218
Other	36.2	46.6	17.2	58
None Specified	25.4	34.9	39.7	63
Born-Again?				
Yes	40.8	31.7	27.5	578
No	37.2	35.8	27.0	422
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times a Week	43.9	26.0	30.1	196
Once per Week	38.0	34.1	28.0	440
Nearly Every Week	39.2	38.0	22.9	166
Once per Month	45.8	33.3	20.8	72
Seldom/Never	33.3	36.5	30.2	126
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	39.0	32.3	28.8	403
Very	40.7	32.1	27.3	396
Somewhat	37.3	38.3	24.4	201
Fundamentalist?				
Yes	44.7	27.9	27.4	197
No	36.4	26.6	37.0	649
Unsure	38.4	36.7	25.0	154
Sword of The Lord I.D.?				
Heard of	45.7	26.6	27.8	173
Never Heard of	38.0	34.8	27.2	827

Gender	**Increase Strongly**	**Increase**	**Decrease**	**Decrease Strongly**	**n =**
Male	32.3	11.3	11.0	22.3	399
Female/At Home	25.2	11.3	9.7	22.3	310
Female/Employed	22.3	14.1	13.1	22.0	291

increased expenditures for defense and lower income families either less supportive or opposed. For example, respondents from families earning over $40,000 per year support increased spending 45.5% to 31.2% while those from families earning under $10,000 per year favor defense spending *cuts* by a 37.7%-31.8% margin. Interestingly, upper white-collar respondents are the only respondents (aside from those not in the labor force) who show a plurality, though slight, *against* increased defense spending, while lower white-collar and both upper and lower blue-collar evangelicals are supportive of increased expenditures for defense.

As was the case with the nuclear freeze, both race and denomination help us understand differences among evangelicals on the question of defense spending. White evangelicals back increased defense spending by a margin of nine percentage points (40.9%-31.2%), while blacks in the sample are opposed by a margin of twenty points (47.4%-27.8%). Catholics and Lutherans are much more resistant to increased defense spending than are other evangelical religious groups.

If there is an evangelical "gender gap" on defense spending, it is relatively slight. Men favor increased spending 43.6% to 33.3% while both women employed outside the home and women who remain home are somewhat less certain about increased spending. However, the differences between the sexes are not particularly great. Interestingly, when *intensity* of feeling is taken into account (e.g., the percent who feel "strongly" about their position), women who work outside the home appear somewhat more dovish than men.

Some of our religious/fundamentalist variables are helpful in understanding evangelical attitudes on defense spending while others are not. There is virtually no difference on this issue between born-again evangelicals and those who have not had a born-again experience. Biblical literalists and those who believe that the Bible reflects man's feelings hold comparable views on defense spending. However, those evangelicals who say they attend religious services "several times a week" are more supportive of *increased* spending (43.9% favor, 26.0% opposed) than are those who seldom or never attend services (33.3% favor, 36.5% oppose). Self-described fundamentalists are strongly supportive of increased defense spending, with 44.7% saying they favor such increases and 27.9% saying they favor decreased expenditures, while non-fundamentalists are split on the issue, 38.4% favoring an increase and 36.7% favoring a decrease. The same difference appears among those who say they have heard of the publication *Sword of the Lord* and those who have not heard of the publication.

Defense spending has, of course, become a partisan and an ideological issue, as our evangelical sample reflects. Republicans, particularly conservative Republicans, show substantial support for increased defense spending, while Democrats—including conservative Democrats—favor a cut in defense spending.

Nationwide surveys throughout 1983 generally found that a plurality of

Americans thought that the country was spending "too much" on defense. Relatively few people answered that "too little" was being spent. But evangelicals in our survey are equally divided on the question of defense spending, and a slight plurality actually favor more money for defense. Our evangelical sample would appear, then, to be more supportive of spending for national defense than the public as a whole.

El Salvador and Central America

We have seen that the evangelical sample is split almost evenly on the desirability of a nuclear freeze and on future levels of defense spending. Evangelicals, however, show surprising levels of support for sending military support or military aid and advisors "to El Salvador and other Central American countries in order to stop the spread of Communism." The sample was asked a two-question sequence about American involvement in Central America. The first question asked about the sending of U.S. troops, while the follow-up question, posed only to those who opposed sending troops (n=440), asked about "sending military aid and military advisors" to the area. Evangelical respondents oppose sending American *troops* by a surprisingly narrow margin (44.0%-39.4%), but one-third of those opposing troops indicate that they would support military *aid* and military *advisors* to Central America. Only one-quarter of evangelicals rule out either troops or military aid and advisors.

Table 4.3 Attitudes Toward American Aid

All Respondents (n=1000)		n=
Favor Use of Troops	39.4%	394
Oppose Use of Troops	44.0%	440
Unsure	16.6%	166
Among Opponents of Troops Only (n=440)		
Favor Aid/Advisors	34.1%	150
Oppose Aid/Advisors	58.0%	255
Unsure	8.0%	35
All Respondents* (n=1000)		
Favor Aid/Advisors *or* Troops	54.4%	544
Oppose Aid/Advisors *&* Troops	25.5%	255
Unsure	20.1%	201

*Combines other figures in table

Once again, denomination, race and ideology divide the sample. Catholics, Methodists and high-status denomination evangelicals show strong opposition to the use of American troops or American military assistance, while Lutherans and Baptists are much more supportive of American action. (We note that the more conservative Lutheran position on this issue is in contrast to their more liberal positions on defense spending and a nuclear freeze, an anomaly for which we do not have an immediate explanation.) Catholics oppose the use of troops by a twenty percentage point margin (53.9%-33.5%), while Protestants are almost equally divided, with 42.3% in favor and 40.4% opposed. Roughly one-third of those in both groups opposing the use of troops say that they would support military aid and advisors.

Black evangelicals are opposed to sending U.S. troops by more than two-to-one (58.8%-27.8%), while white respondents divide almost evenly, 42.1% opposed and 40.9% in favor. One-quarter of opposing blacks and slightly over one-third of opposing whites say they would favor military aid and advisors to the area. The racial division on this issue parallels responses from the racial groups on the nuclear freeze issue and on defense spending. Black evangelicals prove to be significantly more "dovish" on foreign policy questions than are their white counterparts.

While strictly partisan differences are few, ideology and partisanship combine to play a factor in the pattern of responses to this issue. Conservative Republicans are the only target group to favor the use of troops (47.2%-39.4%), while other ideological target groups do not. Even conservative Democrats oppose the use of American troops in Central America. On the follow-up question concerning aid and advisors, conservative Republicans are again much more supportive.

The relative dovishness of conservative Democrats (on this question and on defense spending) may indicate that the term conservative no longer distinguishes what may be considered the traditional liberal or conservative opinions on certain foreign policy questions.

We find a general tendency for mid-range occupational status groups—those with high school educations, higher level blue-collar jobs, and middle income levels—to be most supportive of the American presence in El Salvador. Opposition to the use of American troops or American aid and advisors is particularly strong at both ends of the educational spectrum. High school graduates are the only evangelical educational groups which support the use of American troops (45.2%-37.0%), with opposition to troops particularly strong from the more highly educated.

The only evangelical respondents (aside from those not in the labor force) who support the use of American troops in Central America are upper blue-collar workers. A plurality of all other occupation classifications oppose the use of troops in the area, with upper white-collar and retired evangelicals particularly opposed. However, when the two question sequence is examined, a majority of employed evangelicals and a plurality of retired ones support some type of American action.

Family income also offers some interesting evidence as to which evangelicals are more supportive of American action than are others. The only income group in which a plurality of respondents favor the use of U.S. troops is the $30,000-$39,000 income range (44.7% pro, 40.8% con). All other groupings oppose using troops, though in the case of the $20,000-$29,999 respondents the margin (43.4% against, 42.3% for) is statistically insignificant. However, when the two question sequence is examined it is clear that (1) those earning between $20,000 and $29,000 are more supportive of some sort of American action than are lower income respondents and (2) a plurality of all groups support either aid or troops.

Older evangelicals (those over 55 years of age) are much less supportive of American action than are younger evangelicals. As we found with the nuclear freeze issue, older respondents were more likely to be undecided about their position on American action in Central America.

By almost identical margins of eight percentage points, both men and non-working women oppose the use of U.S. troops in Central America (men, 40.9% in favor and 48.1% opposed; non-working women, 34.8% in favor and 42.9% opposed). By contrast, working women are split on the issue, making them more receptive to troops (42.3% in favor and 39.5% opposed). However, when the two-step sequence is examined, it becomes clear that women in general are less willing to commit forces *or* aid and advisors than are men. Over 60% of men are either willing to use troops or to use aid and advisors, while less than 50% of working women and a bare majority (50.3%) of non-working women share the same view.

A number of our measures of fundamentalism/religiosity appear to be

Table 4.4. Central American Aid

"Do you favor or oppose sending U.S. troops to El Salvador and other Central American countries in order to stop the spread of communism?"

Follow-up to "opposed" only: "Do you favor or oppose sending military advisors to El Salvador and other Central American countries?"

	Support Troops	Oppose Troops	Unsure	n =
Denomination				
Baptist	46.4%	36.9%	16.8%	274
Methodist	32.5	50.8	16.7	120
Lutheran	52.3	40.0	7.7	65
High-Status Denom.	30.8	46.2	23.1	65
Conservative Denom.	37.2	38.7	24.1	137
Catholic	33.0	54.1	12.8	218
Other	41.4	43.1	15.5	58
None Specified	42.9	41.3	15.9	63
Race				
Black	27.8	58.8	13.4	97
White	40.9	42.1	17.0	871

	Support Troops	Oppose Troops	Unsure	n =
Other	34.4	50.0	15.6	32
Political Target Groups				
Conservative Republicans	47.2	39.4	13.4	254
Moderate/Liberal Republicans	36.2	42.0	21.7	69
Ticket-Splitters	35.9	44.7	19.4	206
Conservative Democrats	39.4	43.8	16.9	249
Moderate/Liberal Democrats	34.7	49.6	15.8	222
Party Registration				
Republican	42.6	39.9	17.4	333
Democrat	37.4	46.3	16.3	529
Independent	39.1	44.9	15.9	138
Education				
No High School Degree	35.4	44.7	19.9	161
High School Grad	45.2	37.0	17.9	330
Some College	40.4	46.6	13.0	292
College Grad	31.0	49.0	20.0	145
Grad School	34.7	54.2	11.1	72

Follow-up Among Those Opposing Troops	Favor Aid, Advisors	Oppose Aid, Advisors	Unsure	n =
No High School Degree	20.8	65.3	13.9	72
High School Grad	35.3	59.0	5.7	122
Some College	39.7	53.7	6.6	136
College Grad	36.6	56.3	7.0	71
Grad School	30.8	59.0	10.3	39

	Support Troops	Oppose Troops; Support Advisors, Aid	Oppose Troops, Advisors, Aid	Unsure	n =
No High School Degree	35.4	9.3	29.2	26.1	161
High School Grad	45.2	13.0	21.8	20.0	330
Some College	40.4	18.5	25.0	16.1	292
College Grad	31.0	17.9	27.6	23.4	145
Grad School	34.7	16.7	31.9	16.7	72

Occupation	Support Troops	Oppose Troops; Support Advisors, Aid	Oppose Troops, Advisors, Aid	Unsure	n =
Upper White-Collar	35.4	21.5	27.6	15.4	246
Lower White-Collar	38.9	13.9	23.1	24.1	108
Upper Blue-Collar	45.5	12.5	24.6	17.4	224
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Retired	30.8	17.1	22.3	29.9	211
Not In Labor Force	50.0	6.4	20.2	23.4	94
Total Family Income					
Under $10,000	35.3	9.4	28.2	27.1	85
$10,000-$19,999	35.7	14.7	26.2	23.4	244
$20,000-$29,999	42.3	15.4	25.7	16.6	253
$30,000-$39,999	47.7	13.2	27.0	12.1	174
$40,000 +	35.1	21.4	22.1	21.4	154
Refused	36.7	12.2	23.3	27.8	90

	Support Troops	Oppose Troops; Support Advisors, Aid	Oppose Troops, Advisors, Aid	Unsure	n =
Age					
18-24	43.1	19.8	24.2	12.9	116
25-34	45.1	11.2	25.2	18.5	222
35-44	42.8	15.5	23.5	18.2	187
45-54	41.1	17.1	26.2	15.6	141
55-64	32.6	14.7	30.9	21.8	156
65 +	31.6	14.3	24.3	29.8	168
No Answer	20.0	20.0	10.0	50.0	10
Gender					
Male	40.9	20.1	24.8	14.3	399
Female/At Home	34.8	15.5	23.9	25.8	310
Female/Employed	42.3	7.6	28.2	22.0	291
Born-Again?					
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Frequency of Church Attendance					
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Seldom/Never	37.3	12.7	31.0	19.0	126
Fundamentalist?					
Yes	49.8	14.7	20.3	15.2	197
No	37.1	15.3	27.9	19.7	649
Unsure	35.7	14.3	22.1	27.9	154
Creation Story in Bible					
Literally True	42.7	14.6	23.2	19.5	405
True Account	41.9	13.5	24.1	20.5	370
Man's Feelings	30.6	18.3	31.7	19.4	180
Don't Know	24.4	17.8	33.3	24.4	45

significant and to help explain the various responses of our sample. Born-agains favor the use of troops 43.4%-38.8%, while non-born-agains *oppose* such action by a margin of 51.2%-33.9%. However, the difference between the two groups is not nearly as large after the follow-up question is included, since non-born-agains are just as willing as born-agains to provide aid and advisors.

There is little difference in the nature of the responses of those who attend religious services frequently and of those who attend rarely. When the follow-up question is added, it becomes evident that those who attend services regularly are more supportive of American actions than are those who do not.

Fundamentalists and Biblical literalists prove to be measurably more supportive of American activity (either troops or aid) than non-fundamentalists or those who believe that the Bible reflects "man's feelings." Almost half of fundamentalist respondents (49.8%) say they favor the use of U.S. troops in El

Salvador and Central America, while only 37.2% of non-fundamentalists hold the same view. Similarly, while Biblical literalists are split on the subject (42.7% in favor, 41.5% opposed), those evangelical respondents who say that the Bible reflects man's feelings are overwhelmingly opposed, with 30.6% favoring troops and 52.2% in opposition. The same trend appears for the follow-up questions. Both fundamentalists and Biblical literalists are much more supportive of the use of military aid and advisors than are non-fundamentalists and those who see the Bible as resulting from "man's feelings."

A number of the other measures of religiosity, however, are less useful in understanding the responses. There are virtually no differences among the responses of those who say religion is "extremely important," "very important" and "somewhat important" in their daily lives. Those who had heard of the fundamentalist publication *Sword of the Lord* have similar responses to those who have never heard of the publication.

Conclusion

We have looked in this chapter at our evangelical sample's attitudes towards several different foreign policy and national defense issues. What we found is that evangelicals, along with many Americans, are torn between policies which emphasize military preparedness and even activism, on the one hand, and policies which place the highest priority on arms control, on the other hand. While evangelicals are split evenly on the advisability of a nuclear freeze, they are more supportive of increased defense spending than not. Evangelicals in our sample also tend to support the sending of military aid and advisors to Central American countries in order to stop the spread of communism, but they split approximately evenly on the advisability of sending American troops to these countries.

Our examination of bivariate (two-variable) relationships between these attitudes and demographic and religious variables leads to a very basic conclusion: there are not strongly significant patterns of relationships between any of our measures of depth of religiosity or fundamentalism and position on these foreign policy issues. The major religious variable which helps explain the evangelical's attitudes on these issues is his or her denomination. Catholics and Lutherans are more supportive of a nuclear freeze and are above average in support for decreased defense spending. Catholics and Methodists are generally less in favor of sending troops to Central America than are evangelicals in other denominations.

The only other religious variable which is related to these foreign policy issues is frequency of church attendance. More frequent church attendees (two or three times each week) are more likely to have conservative positions on these foreign policy issues than are those who attend church less frequently.

The data indicate that there are differences in foreign policy positions among demographic and geographic subgroups. Generally, black evangelicals and those who identify themselves as more liberal are least in favor of the United States expending more money on defense. They are also less likely to favor an American commitment in Central America and more likely to favor a nuclear freeze. White-collar and upper income evangelicals are more conservative on a nuclear freeze and on defense spending, but they are more liberal on the question of American troops or military assistance for Central American nations. Blue-collar respondents tend to support the freeze, but also to support American activity in Central America and increased defense expenditures. This is particularly true of upper-blue-collar respondents (those in more skilled trades and crafts).

In the chapter which follows, we will examine several domestic and "moral" issues. In Chapter VII, we will look at both the foreign policy issues and these domestic issues in a slightly different fashion.

Chapter V

Social Issues

The so-called social issues have attracted a good deal of attention in recent years, and evangelicals might be expected to be interested in them. Reactions to some of these issues—especially school prayer, the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion—are particularly intense. Other issues, such as tuition tax credits and the availability of birth control information in the public schools, have from time to time attracted substantial attention. Finally, the issue of AIDS, Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome, was an explosive issue at the time our survey was taken, and thus was a useful way to measure underlying attitudes toward homosexuality. We asked the sample of 1000 evangelicals about each of these issues, and the responses showed a good deal of diversity of opinion.

School Prayer

The evangelical sample is in almost total agreement on the subject of school prayer. A huge 91.4% of the sample thinks that "voluntary prayer should be allowed in the public schools" (77% feel strongly), while only 5.8% disagree. All categories of evangelicals deliver solid majorities for prayer in school. There are some differences among subsamples, but those differences are limited to differences in *intensity*, with certain subsamples more likely to indicate that they feel "strongly" about the desirability of voluntary school prayer than other groups.

Support for school prayer is especially strong in the southern part of the country, as well as among conservative Democrats (many of whom live in the South). Baptists and conservative denomination evangelicals are particularly intense in their support, while members of high-status denominations (Presbyterians, United Presbyterians, Covenant Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians) and Lutherans are least supportive. For example, 18.5% of

Lutherans and 12.3% of members of high-status denominations oppose school prayer, percentages above those of other evangelical respondents.

Over 80% (and mostly over 90%) of all age, income, occupation and education subsamples support school prayer. Younger evangelicals are slightly less strong in their support: only 62.1% of respondents 18-24 years of age are *strongly* in support of school prayer, while no other age group falls below 75% on this 'strongly' measure. Upper white-collar evangelicals and those not in the labor force also fall below other respondents in their intensity of support, as do wealthier respondents, particularly those with a total family income over $40,000 per year.

Those evangelicals who attended graduate school are more likely to oppose school prayer than are respondents from other education levels. (Those who attended graduate school and favor school prayer are generally less intense in their support than are other educational groups.) There are no significant differences between men and women, blacks and whites, Protestants and Catholics, or Republicans and Democrats on the issue of prayer in public school. All support it at the same levels and with the same degree of intensity.

Our measures of fundamentalism/religiosity do distinguish some differences among the respondents on this school prayer question. The two most important variables are frequency of church attendance and self-defined importance of religion in daily life. Evangelicals who "seldom" or "never" attend religious

Table 5.1. School Prayer

"At the present time, prayers are not allowed in the public schools. Do you think that voluntary public prayer should be allowed in public schools?"

	Yes, strongly	**Yes**	**No**	**No, strongly**	**Unsure**	**n =**
All Respondents	**76.9%**	**14.8%**	**2.0%**	**3.8%**	**2.5%**	**1000**
By Region						
New England/Mid-Atlantic	75.4	13.9	4.6	4.6	1.5	130
East/North Central	68.2	19.6	2.8	5.6	3.7	214
West/North Central	67.7	22.6	3.2	3.2	3.2	62
South Atlantic	84.9	10.7	1.0	1.5	2.0	205
East/South Central	79.6	14.8	1.1	2.3	2.3	88
West/South Atlantic	82.9	10.5	0.0	3.3	3.3	152
Mountain/Pacific	75.8	15.4	2.0	5.4	1.3	149
Denomination						
Baptist	83.2	13.1	0.4	1.5	1.8	274
Methodist	72.5	21.7	0.8	3.3	1.7	120
Lutheran	66.2	13.9	10.8	7.7	1.5	65
High-Status Denom.	64.6	20.0	3.1	9.2	3.1	65
Conservative Denom.	86.1	8.0	0.7	2.2	2.9	137
Catholic	72.9	16.1	2.8	4.6	3.7	218

All Respondents	**Yes, strongly 76.9%**	**Yes 14.8%**	**No 2.0%**	**No, strongly 3.8%**	**Unsure 2.5%**	**n = 1000**
Other	72.4	17.2	3.5	6.9	0.0	58
None specified	79.4	12.7	0.0	3.2	4.8	63
Age						
18-24	62.1	26.7	3.5	6.9	0.9	116
25-34	76.1	16.2	2.3	3.6	1.8	222
35-44	76.5	15.0	1.6	4.3	2.7	187
45-54	82.3	10.6	0.0	3.6	3.6	141
55-64	80.8	11.5	1.9	1.9	3.9	156
65+	81.6	10.7	3.0	3.0	1.8	168
No Answer	60.0	20.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	10
Occupation						
Upper White-Collar	70.7	17.9	2.9	5.7	2.9	246
Lower White-Collar	82.4	11.1	1.9	2.8	1.9	108
Upper Blue-Collar	79.5	13.4	1.8	4.5	0.9	224
Lower Blue-Collar	76.1	18.0	1.7	1.7	2.6	117
Retired	82.0	10.0	1.4	2.4	4.3	211
Not in Labor Force	70.2	21.3	2.1	4.3	2.1	94
Total Family Income						
Under $10,000	80.0	10.6	2.4	2.4	4.7	85
$10,000-$19,999	82.8	9.8	1.2	3.7	2.5	244
$20,000-$29,999	73.1	18.2	2.0	4.0	2.8	253
$30,000-$39,999	78.7	13.2	3.5	3.5	1.2	174
$40,000 +	71.4	18.8	1.3	5.8	2.6	154
Refused	74.4	18.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	90
Education						
No High School Degree	86.3	6.2	2.5	2.5	2.5	161
High School Grad	78.2	15.5	1.8	2.1	2.4	330
Some College	76.0	14.7	1.7	5.8	1.7	292
College Grad	69.0	23.5	1.4	2.8	3.5	145
Grad School	69.4	13.9	4.2	8.3	4.2	72
Frequency of Church Attendance						
Several Times/Week	82.7	12.8	0.5	1.0	3.1	196
Once per Week	76.1	15.5	1.6	5.0	1.8	440
Nearly Every Week	80.7	13.3	1.8	3.0	1.2	166
Once per Month	72.2	12.5	9.7	2.8	2.8	72
Seldom/Never	68.3	19.1	1.6	5.6	5.6	126
Importance of Religion						
Extremely	83.9	9.4	1.7	2.2	2.7	403
Very	79.0	13.1	1.8	4.0	2.0	396
Somewhat	58.7	28.9	3.0	6.5	3.0	201
Race						
Black	78.4	10.3	1.0	7.2	3.1	97
White	76.8	15.4	2.1	3.3	2.4	871
Other	75.0	12.5	3.1	6.3	3.1	32

services and those who say religion is only "somewhat important" in their daily lives are not as strongly supportive of voluntary school prayer as are other categories of evangelicals. Our other measures of fundamentalism/religiosity show only small differences on this issue.

In short, voluntary prayer in the public school has support from the great majority of evangelicals, support which is generally strong across a number of political, ideological or demographic factors. Those evangelicals who are less religious are not surprisingly somewhat less enthusiastic about voluntary school prayer, but a majority of these less religious respondents *still* support the policy. It is rare indeed to find a subject on which there is such near-unanimity and on which support is so intense.

National surveys, such as those done by the Gallup Organization, have also consistently found solid support for voluntary school prayer. In late July, 1983, Gallup asked a nationwide sample whether they would favor or oppose "a proposed Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow voluntary prayer in the public schools." (It is important to note that our survey question asked about the *general* issue without reference to any particular statute or amendment.) Both surveys were taken in roughly the same period. Gallup found that 81% of those who had either heard of or read the amendment favored it, while only 14% opposed it. Our evangelical sample was more supportive of school prayer by about ten percentage points. (The differences between the questions could account for the slightly different responses.) Interestingly, Gallup's survey found a rather sizable difference in white/nonwhite responses, with 79% of whites and 91% of non-whites supporting the amendment. Our survey found no such discrepancy.

Tuition Tax Credits

A clear 52.8%-37.1% of our evangelical sample support tuition tax credits for parents who "choose to send their children to private or parochial schools." There are clear differences in this support level by race and religious preference. White evangelicals show a strong 53.9%-36.2% preference for tax credits. However, black respondents *oppose* those credits by a margin of seven percentage points (48.5% against, 41.2% in favor), and their opposition is particularly intense. While 61.3% of whites who oppose tax credits say they are *strongly* opposed, 84.9% of black opponents who disapprove of tuition tax credits are *strongly* opposed.

Not surprisingly, Catholic respondents support tuition tax credits by a margin of more than two-to-one, while Protestants are only narrowly supportive. Respondents from both conservative Protestant denominations and high-status denominations prove to be particularly resistant to tuition tax credits.

Two other variables, both of which are related to religion and religious affiliation, also are related to this issue. The more important religion is in a respondent's daily life, the more likely he or she is to support tuition tax credits.

Respondents who attend religious services less than once a week are more likely to oppose tuition tax credits than are other respondents.

Finally, moderates and liberals in our evangelical sample are only narrowly supportive of tuition tax credits while conservatives, including conservative Democrats (51.8% for, 36.6% against), are measurably more supportive of the proposal. Since party registration shows no difference between Republicans' and Democrats' attitudes on the issue, ideology appears to be the significant variable.

A few other differences by demographic and religious groupings show up in the data, but these differences are not as significant as race and religious affiliation. Respondents under 25 years of age are more skeptical of tax credits than other age groups, though the *intensity* of their opposition is noticeably low. Education, income and occupation differences do not help explain the various responses to the question of the desirability of tax credits. Whether or not one has had a born-again experience also seems to be irrelevant, as is one's view on the literal nature of the Bible. Fundamentalists are no different than non-fundamentalists (55.8% of fundamentalists are in favor of tax credits, 53.3% of non-fundamentalists approve), though when intensity of feeling is taken into account fundamentalists appear more supportive. On the other hand, those respondents who have heard of the fundamentalist publication *Sword of the Lord* are actually *less* supportive of tuition tax credits than are those evangelical respondents who had not heard of the publication.

While our survey does not provide us with a definitive explanation as to why some evangelicals support tuition tax credits and others do not, we can offer some possible answers. The opposition of black evangelicals suggests they believe they would not benefit from the proposal. This is interesting, particularly because advocates of the plan argue that it would help middle and lower class families who currently cannot afford to send their children to private

Table 5.2. Tuition Tax Credits

"Do you favor or oppose a tuition tax credit—where parents are given tax credits if they choose to send their children to private or parochial schools?"

All Respondents	Favor 52.8%	Oppose 37.1%	Unsure 10.1%	n = 1000
Race				
Black	41.2	48.5	10.3	97
White	53.9	36.2	10.0	871
Other	59.4	28.1	13.5	32
Religion				
Protestant	49.5	38.9	11.7	669
Catholic	63.9	30.9	5.2	230
Other	49.5	39.6	10.9	101

All Respondents	Favor 52.8%	Oppose 37.1%	Unsure 10.1%	n = 1000
Denomination				
High-Status Denom.	47.7	47.7	4.6	65
Conservative Denom.	43.1	43.8	13.1	137
Baptist	49.3	35.4	15.3	274
Methodist	47.5	41.7	10.8	120
Lutheran	53.9	41.5	4.6	65
Catholic	65.1	30.3	4.6	218
Other	53.5	36.2	10.3	58
None Specified	60.3	30.2	9.5	63
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	56.6	31.3	12.2	403
Very	51.8	38.4	9.9	396
Somewhat	47.3	46.3	6.5	201
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	53.1	32.1	14.8	196
Once per Week	56.1	34.8	9.1	440
Nearly Every Week	47.6	42.8	9.6	166
Once per Month	40.3	47.2	12.5	72
Seldom/Never	54.8	39.7	5.6	126
Party				
Republican	55.0	36.0	9.0	333
Democrat	51.2	37.8	11.0	529
Independent	53.6	37.0	9.4	138
Ideology				
Conservative	56.6	32.7	10.7	618
Moderate	37.3	38.2	24.6	110
Liberal	50.4	46.7	2.9	272

All Respondents	Favor, Strongly 37.6	Favor 15.2	Oppose 13.2	Oppose, Strongly 23.9	Unsure 10.1	n = 1000
Age						
18-24	31.0	18.0	21.6	23.3	6.0	116
25-34	43.7	15.8	11.7	18.9	9.9	222
35-44	38.5	13.9	11.8	30.0	5.9	187
45-54	39.0	18.4	8.5	25.5	8.5	141
55-64	37.8	11.5	10.3	27.6	12.8	156
65 +	32.7	14.3	17.9	18.5	16.7	168
No Answer	20.0	20.0	10.0	40.0	10.0	10
Fundamentalist?						
Yes	44.7	11.2	9.6	22.3	12.2	197
No	37.6	15.7	13.7	25.1	7.9	649
Unsure	28.6	18.2	15.6	20.8	16.9	154
Sword of the Lord I.D.?						
Heard of	32.4	13.9	12.7	27.2	13.9	173
Never Heard of	38.7	15.5	13.3	23.2	9.3	827

schools. Black evangelicals apparently have not come to accept this argument. They may view the proposal as an attempt by upper and middle class whites to give themselves a tax break. They may also see it as a threat to the public school system on which many of them depend.

The relatively greater opposition from Protestants is also explainable, though for different reasons. To many people, "private" schools equal parochial schools, which historically have been mostly Catholic in this country. Some Protestants undoubtedly see tax credits as essentially a Catholic benefit, and they oppose them on that ground. Indeed, this is one of the only ways to explain the coolness with which members of conservative Protestant denominations (e.g., Pentacostal, Nazarene, Assembly of God), which could be expected to favor the proposal since they have been most active in setting up private, church-related schools, oppose tuition tax credits. This explanation becomes more persuasive when we remember that there historically has been some hostility between members of conservative Protestant denominations and the Catholic Church. Some of the more doctrinaire fundamentalists oppose tuition tax credits precisely because it involves the government in private schools, even though the involvement in the case of tuition tax credits could be benign. Some fundamentalists may prefer to sacrifice the benefits of tuition tax credits so as to avoid setting a precedent for government intervention in private (and church) schools.

Equal Rights Amendment

Evangelicals support the proposed Equal Rights Amendment by a margin of more than two-to-one (55.5%-26.2%) with 18% unsure, according to the results of our survey. More importantly, support for the amendment cuts across virtually all segments of the sample. While there are clear differences between subgroups, even the most hostile categories show a plurality, and frequently a majority, for the amendment.

Blacks, lower income families, Democrats and those who are *less* religious are some of the most supportive evangelical groups for the ERA. While a bare majority of white evangelicals indicate support for the ERA, over 86% of black evangelicals favor the proposal. Similarly a bare majority of families with an income over $40,000 support the amendment, while over 64% of families under $10,000 back the ERA. Conservative Republicans actually oppose the amendment (they are the only subgroup to do so), and moderate and liberal Republicans and ticket-splitters support the amendment at a rate much lower than do either conservative or moderate and liberal Democrats. None of this should be particularly surprising. The ERA has become an ideological issue which draws traditionally liberal and Democratic demographic groups to its support and generates opposition from more conservative and Republican elements.

Gender and religiosity are two of the more interesting variables in relationship to the ERA. Evangelical men back the ERA 55.9%-26.8% and evangelical women who work outside the home support the proposal by almost three-to-one, 62.9% in favor and 21.7% opposed. However, evangelical women who remain at home were noticeably *less* supportive of the proposal. While a plurality still back the amendment, the margin between supporters (48.1%) and opponents (29.7%) is much smaller than for men or working women.

There appears to be a direct relationship between religiosity and opposition to the ERA. While the proposal overall receives the support of fundamentalists *and* non-fundamentalists, frequent churchgoers *and* infrequent church attendees, and Biblical literalists *and* non-literalists, it is clear that *the more religious one is, the more likely one is to oppose the Equal Rights Amendment*. Frequent church attendees are much more hostile to the ERA than are those evangelicals who "seldom or never" attend services. Similarly, those respondents who believe that the Bible reflects man's feelings rather than the word of God and those who believe that religion is "somewhat important" in their daily lives are more likely (by fifteen to twenty percentage points) to support the Equal Rights Amendment. Fundamentalists are much less supportive of the amendment than are non-fundamentalists.

The two exceptions to this general rule are our "born-again" and "Sword of the Lord" variables. Born-again evangelicals are not measureably less supportive of the ERA than their non-born-again counterparts, and those respondents who have heard of the *Sword of the Lord* do not differ from those evangelicals who are unfamiliar with the publication.

Nationwide support for the Equal Rights Amendment has fluctuated considerably over the past decade, depending on when the question was asked and how the question was posed. An August 1980 Gallup survey found 67% of respondents backing the ERA, while another Gallup survey almost one year later found support at 63% among those who knew of the amendment. An April 1981 CBS News/*New York Times* survey found support for the ERA at 57%, and a late June 1982 CBS News survey put support at 52%. Our own evangelical

Table 5.3 Equal Rights Amendment Survey Results

GALLUP			TARRANCE/INST. FOR GOVERNMENT & POLITICS		
	Favor	**Oppose**		**Favor**	**Oppose**
Nationwide Sample	59%	36%			
"Evangelicals"	51	46	"Evangelicals"	55.5%	26.2%
Religion			Religion		
"Very Important"	52	42	"Extremely Impt."	49.1	33.3
"Fairly Important"	63	33	"Very Impt."	57.3	23.5
"Somewhat Impt."	76	11	"Somewhat Impt."	64.7	17.4

Gallup Source: *The Gallup Report*, no. 217, October, 1983, p. 162.

survey, conducted in the summer of 1983, finds support among evangelicals at 55.5%, at the lower end of recent surveys of public attitudes toward the amendment. We also find that particularly religious subsamples are more critical of the amendment, suggesting that religious beliefs are an element in explaining attitudes toward the ERA. Gallup's "Religion in America" found a similar trend.

While some conservatives have argued that the proposed Equal Rights Amendment could constitute a "blank check" for liberal judges and could result in the radical transformation of society, they apparently have not made their case to many evangelicals, and even to those evangelicals normally considered to be conservative. As we have seen, 61.8% of our respondents describe themselves as either "very conservative" (13.6%) or "somewhat conservative" (48.1%), and as we will note later in this chapter, over 45% of "conservative denomination" evangelicals say they believe that AIDS is "God's punishment" for homosexuals, a rather strong position. Yet, only 31.4% of conservative denomination respondents indicate that they oppose the Equal Rights Amendment. Evidently, conservatives have failed to demonstrate to voters who are their natural allies that the ERA would bring about undesirable consequences.

Table 5.4. Equal Rights Amendment

"Are you personally for or against the Equal Rights Amendment?"

	Favor	**Oppose**	**Unsure**	**n =**
All Respondents	**55.5%**	**26.2%**	**18.3%**	**1000**
Age				
18-24	62.9	26.7	10.3	116
25-34	57.2	30.2	12.6	222
35-44	51.3	30.0	18.7	187
45-54	58.9	21.3	19.9	141
55-64	55.8	23.1	21.2	156
65 +	50.0	24.4	25.6	168
No Answer	50.0	10.0	40.0	10
Total Family Income				
Under $10,000	64.7	16.5	18.8	85
$10,000-$19,999	54.9	23.8	21.3	244
$20,000-$29,999	53.8	28.5	17.8	253
$30,000-$39,999	61.5	26.4	12.1	174
$40,000 +	52.0	31.8	16.2	154
Refused	47.8	25.6	26.7	90
Race				
Black	86.6	4.1	9.3	97
White	51.2	29.3	19.5	871
Other	78.1	9.4	12.5	32

	Favor	Oppose	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**55.5%**	**26.2%**	**18.3%**	**1000**
Party				
Republican	44.4	35.7	19.8	333
Democrat	64.5	19.3	16.3	529
Independent	47.8	29.7	22.5	138
Ideology				
Conservative	49.5	32.5	18.0	618
Moderate	49.1	16.4	34.6	110
Liberal	71.7	15.8	12.5	272
Gender				
Male	55.9	26.8	17.3	399
Female/At Home	48.1	29.7	22.3	310
Female/Employed	62.9	21.7	15.5	291
Born-Again?				
Yes	52.9	27.9	19.2	578
No	59.0	23.9	17.1	422
Sword of Lord I.D.?				
Heard of	54.9	30.6	14.5	173
Never Heard of	55.6	25.3	19.1	827
Fundamentalist?				
Yes	49.2	34.5	16.2	197
No	57.9	24.8	17.3	649
Unsure	53.3	21.4	25.3	154
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	43.9	39.3	16.8	196
Once per Week	54.3	26.1	19.6	440
Nearly Every Week	62.7	22.3	15.1	166
Once per Month	59.7	23.6	16.7	72
Seldom/Never	65.9	12.7	21.4	126
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	54.6	26.7	18.8	405
True Account	48.4	30.5	21.1	370
Man's Feelings	68.9	17.8	13.3	180
Don't Know	68.9	20.0	11.1	45
Denomination				
Baptist	55.5	25.9	18.6	274
Methodist	53.3	28.3	18.3	120
Lutheran	56.9	27.7	15.4	65
High-Status Denom.	55.4	29.2	15.4	65
Conservative Denom.	46.7	31.4	21.9	137
Catholic	59.6	22.9	17.4	218
Other	58.6	22.4	19.0	58
None Specified	60.3	22.2	17.5	63
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	49.1	33.3	17.6	403
Very	57.3	23.5	19.2	396
Somewhat	64.7	17.4	17.9	201

Birth Control Information In The Public Schools

While 20.2% of evangelicals say that they *strongly* oppose the dissemination of "information on the availability and use of birth control methods" to teenagers in public schools, a large majority of respondents (68.1%) indicate support for such a program. As was the case with the Equal Rights Amendment, support for birth control information cuts across all demographic and religious groups. Once again, however, there are differences among subgroups, and the religiosity of the evangelical is apparently a relevant variable.

Support for dissemination of birth control information is greatest among those evangelicals who are younger, more highly educated and have a higher total family income. A larger percentage of respondents above 65 years of age feel "strongly" *against* the program than "strongly" for it. Liberals are more likely to favor the information than are conservatives or moderates. However, there is no clear partisan difference on this issue. Blacks (78.4% in favor) are more likely than whites (66.8% in favor) to support the dissemination of such information, though the margin of difference between the racial groups is much smaller than on the desirability of an Equal Rights Amendment.

While there is no male-female gender gap on this issue, there is a large difference in the responses of women based on their employment status. Women who work outside the home support the dissemination of birth control information to public school students by a margin of 78.7% to 16.5%. Women not employed outside the home support the plan, but by a much narrower 57.7%-32.3%.

As was the case with the Equal Rights Amendment, some of the greatest differences within subgroups occur on the basis of our "religious" variables. As a general rule, the more religious the respondent, the more likely he or she is to oppose birth control information in public schools. While 58.3% of those respondents who say religion is "extremely important" in their life favor the dissemination of birth control information, a much larger 72.7% of those who say religion is "very important" and 78.6% of those who describe religion as "somewhat important" back birth control information. Similarly, those evangelicals who attend religious services "several times a week" are much more likely to oppose the distribution of birth control information than others.

While we find little difference between born-agains and those who have not had a born-again experience on issues such as the ERA and tuition tax credits, we *do* find that the born-again dimension is significant concerning birth control in the public schools. Born-again evangelicals favor the dissemination of birth control information by a margin of about two-to-one, while non-born-agains are supportive by an even larger margin, in excess of four-to-one.

Clearly, most evangelicals have not been persuaded that birth control information in public schools is undesirable from either a political or a moral point of view. The issue does evoke greater opposition from those respondents who are particularly religious, but even among these evangelicals, a majority support the teaching of birth control information.

Table 5.5. Availability of Birth Control Information

"In your opinion, should information on the availability and use of birth control methods be taught to teenagers in the public school system?"

	Yes	No	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**68.1%**	**24.8%**	**7.1%**	**1000**
Education				
No High School Degree	58.4	31.1	10.6	161
High School Grad	66.7	25.2	8.2	330
Some College	70.2	23.3	6.5	292
College Grad	73.1	22.8	4.1	145
Grad School	77.8	19.4	2.8	72
Total Family Income				
Under $10,000	63.5	25.9	10.6	85
$10,000-$19,999	59.4	31.2	9.4	244
$20,000-$29,999	71.2	22.9	5.9	253
$30,000-$39,999	76.4	20.1	3.5	174
$40,000 +	77.9	19.5	2.6	154
Refused	54.4	30.0	15.6	90
Race				
Black	78.4	18.6	3.1	97
White	66.8	25.7	7.5	871
Other	71.9	18.8	9.4	32
Ideology				
Conservative	65.7	27.5	6.8	618
Moderate	59.1	30.0	10.9	110
Liberal	77.2	16.5	6.3	272
Party				
Republican	65.2	25.8	9.0	333
Democrat	69.0	24.6	6.4	529
Independent	71.7	23.2	5.1	138
Gender				
Male	68.4	25.1	6.5	399
Female/At Home	57.7	32.3	10.0	310
Female/Employed	78.7	16.5	4.8	291
Born-Again?				
Yes	63.0	30.3	6.8	578
No	75.1	17.3	7.6	422
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	54.1	38.3	7.7	196
Once per Week	67.5	25.5	7.1	440
Nearly every Week	77.7	15.1	7.2	166
Once per Month	70.8	22.2	6.9	72
Seldom/Never	77.8	15.9	6.4	126
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	61.5	29.9	8.6	405
True Account	68.4	24.9	6.8	370

	Yes	No	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	68.1%	24.8%	7.1%	1000
Man's Feelings	83.3	12.8	3.9	180
Don't Know	64.4	26.7	8.9	45
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	58.3	33.0	8.7	403
Very	72.7	21.5	5.8	396
Somewhat	78.6	14.9	6.5	201
Denomination				
Baptist	68.6	26.3	5.1	274
Methodist	67.5	24.2	8.3	120
Lutheran	61.5	29.2	9.2	65
High-Status Denomination	75.4	18.5	6.2	65
Conservative Denomination	63.5	30.7	5.8	137
Catholic	68.8	22.0	9.2	218
Other	70.7	20.7	8.6	58
None Specified	71.4	22.2	6.4	63
Religion				
Protestant	68.5	25.0	6.6	669
Catholic	67.8	22.6	9.6	230
Other	66.3	28.7	5.0	101

	Yes, Strongly	Yes	No	No, Strongly	Unsure	n =
Age						
18-24	75.9	15.5	1.7	5.2	1.7	116
25-34	61.3	18.0	4.1	14.0	2.7	222
35-44	55.6	18.2	3.2	19.3	3.7	187
45-54	49.7	16.3	7.8	18.4	7.8	141
55-64	40.4	15.4	3.9	26.9	13.5	156
65 +	28.0	19.6	6.6	33.3	12.5	168
No Answer	10.0	0.0	10.0	50.0	30.0	10

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

During the spring and summer of 1983, national concern over the disease Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) reached a high level. A June 10-13 Gallup poll found that 77% of its national sample of 1,503 adults had "heard or read" of AIDS. By a margin of 43%-35%, a plurality thought that the disease "is likely to reach epidemic proportions."

In order to examine evangelical attitudes about AIDS, we asked the sample whether they agreed or disagreed that "the fact that AIDS disease has struck largely in the homosexual community is evidence of God's punishment for homosexuals' immoral and sinful lifestyle." The question was formed in such a way as to identify those evangelicals who took a traditional religious view toward homosexuals, rather than to identify "pro-" or "anti-homosexual" evangelicals. For example, one could oppose "homosexual rights" and still disagree with the quote, since it is not necessary to see AIDS as a divine punishment in order to disapprove of homosexuality or oppose special treatment for homosexuals.

Even with this rather strong religiously-oriented wording, only a slight majority (53.1%) of evangelicals disagree with the quote, while about three in ten (30.4%) agree. Evangelicals who are older (over 55 years and particularly over 65), retired, have less formal education and come from families with a lower total family income are most likely to see AIDS as divine punishment. Particularly large percentages of respondents with *at least* a college degree or

Table 5.6 AIDS

As you may know there has been a lot of publicity recently concerning a contagious disease called A-I-D-S or "AIDS." A large percentage of those with this disease are homosexuals. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"The fact that AIDS disease has struck largely in the homosexual community is evidence of God's punishment for homosexuals' immoral and sinful lifestyle."

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**30.4%**	**53.1%**	**16.5%**	**1000**
Education				
No High School Degree	45.3	32.9	21.7	161
High School Grad	33.3	47.9	18.8	330
Some College	26.7	57.9	15.4	292
College Grad	20.0	71.7	8.3	145
Grad School	19.4	65.3	15.3	72
Age				
18-24	31.0	59.5	9.5	116
25-34	30.6	59.0	10.4	222
35-44	28.9	57.8	13.4	187
45-54	22.7	61.0	16.3	141
55-64	32.7	46.2	21.2	156
65 +	35.7	36.3	28.0	168
No Answer	30.0	40.0	30.0	10
Total Family Income				
Under $10,000	32.9	42.4	24.7	85
$10,000-$19,999	41.8	41.8	16.4	244
$20,000-$29,999	31.2	53.8	15.0	253
$30,000-$39,999	20.7	65.5	13.8	174
$40,000 +	18.2	68.8	13.0	154
Refused	34.4	41.1	24.4	90
Race				
Black	29.9	54.6	15.5	97
White	30.4	52.9	16.7	871
Other	31.3	53.1	15.6	32
Gender				
Male	32.3	51.4	16.3	399

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**30.4%**	**53.1%**	**16.5%**	**1000**
Female/At Home	32.9	47.1	20.0	310
Female/Employed	25.1	61.9	13.1	291
Denomination				
Baptist	36.5	44.9	18.6	274
Methodist	17.5	68.3	14.2	120
Lutheran	26.2	63.1	10.8	65
High-Status Denom.	16.9	72.3	10.8	65
Conservative Denom.	45.3	32.9	21.9	137
Catholic	22.0	63.3	14.7	218
Other	34.5	53.5	12.1	58
None Specified	39.7	38.1	22.2	63
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	44.4	31.1	24.5	196
Once per Week	28.4	56.6	15.0	440
Nearly Every Week	24.7	64.5	10.8	166
Once per Month	23.6	62.5	13.9	72
Seldom/Never	27.0	54.8	18.3	126
Fundamentalist?				
Yes	44.2	46.7	9.1	197
No	26.0	55.9	18.0	649
Unsure	31.2	49.4	19.4	154
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	39.5	43.0	17.5	405
True Account	27.6	56.4	16.0	370
Man's Feelings	17.8	70.0	12.2	180
Don't Know	22.2	48.9	28.9	45
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	38.7	42.2	19.1	403
Very	26.8	58.1	15.2	396
Somewhat	20.9	65.2	13.9	201
Born-Again?				
Yes	36.3	46.5	17.1	578
No	22.3	62.1	15.6	422
Sword of the Lord I.D.?				
Heard of	38.7	44.5	16.8	173
Never Heard of	28.7	54.9	16.4	827

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Unsure	n =
Religion						
Protestant	22.3%	10.2%	17.3%	33.2%	17.0%	669
Catholic	13.5	8.7	13.9	48.3	15.7	230
Other	27.7	7.9	12.9	36.6	14.9	101

with a total family income over $30,000 per year disagree with the quote. Race does not help explain the sample's responses. Women employed outside the home are more likely (61.9%) to disagree that AIDS is God's punishment of homosexuals than are men (51.4%) or women who remain at home (47.1%).

The most striking differences among respondents can be traced to religion. Protestants are more likely to agree with the quote than are Catholics (particularly when intensity is taken into account), but there are sharp differences among Protestant denominations. High-status denominations (Presbyterians, United Presbyterians, Covenant Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Episcopalians), Methodists and Lutherans disagree that AIDS constitutes God's punishment of homosexuals—while a much larger percentage of conservative denomination evangelicals (see page 69) agree that AIDS is a divine punishment. (These denominational differences reflect to some degree the differential educational composition of each denomination.)

A solid 44.4%-31.1% plurality of evangelicals who attend religious services "several times a week" *agree* that AIDS is God's punishment of homosexuals, while self-described fundamentalists, Biblical literalists and respondents who say religion is "extremely important" in their daily life divide equally on the meaning of AIDS. Born-again Christians are also measurably more likely to view AIDS as a divine punishment. Finally, those evangelical respondents who have heard of the fundamentalist publication *Sword of the Lord* are also more likely to see AIDS as an indication of homosexuality's immorality and sinfulness than are evangelicals who are unfamiliar with the publication. All in all, more fundamentalist groups within our sample are more likely to agree with the AIDS statement, while those respondents who are less religious are *much* less likely to see AIDS as God's punishment of homosexuals.

In summary, while 26.2% of the sample oppose the ERA and 24.8% oppose birth control information in the public schools, an even larger 30.4% agree that AIDS was God's punishment of homosexuals for the lifestyle they have chosen. Considering the way in which the question was framed, it is clear that there is a solid core of evangelicals who would be opposed to public policies which condone the homosexual lifestyle. Moreover, the data from this question indicate quite clearly that religious beliefs *can* help explain political attitudes.

Abortion

Abortion is frequently portrayed by journalists and feminist activists as a "women's issue," with women favoring legalized abortion on demand. However, a June 24-27, 1983 Gallup survey of 1,558 adults found the public split on the issue, with little difference in the attitudes of men and women. Gallup found that 50% of his sample approved of *Roe v. Wade* (1973), which legalized abortion. A substantial 43% opposed that decision. Gallup also found that most respondents thought that abortions should be legal but only under certain circumstances.

Table 5.7 Abortion Attitudes

	Illegal—all circumstances	Illegal—some circumstances	Legal—All	Unsure
Total Sample	16%	58%	23%	3%
Men only	16%	57%	24%	3%
Women only	17%	58%	22%	3%

Source: Gallup Poll, June 24-27, 1983

Our evangelical sample was asked two major questions about abortion. First, the entire 1000 respondents were asked whether they agreed that "Abortion should not be legally available in the U.S. for any reasons." Respondents who *disagreed or who were uncertain* were then asked whether they believed that "Abortion should be legally available for any adult woman who desires it." The results indicate that evangelicals, like the population as a whole, believe that abortion should be legally available only under certain circumstances.

Table 5.8 Evangelical Attitudes on Abortion

Should be Illegal, all circumstances	27.3%
Should be Illegal, some circumstances	39.1%
Should be Legal, all circumstances	28.7%
Unsure	4.9%

Those respondents who favor outlawing abortion completely tend to be older and have less formal education. They also tend to have a lower family income. Wealthier evangelicals are much more sympathetic to legalized abortion, as are young evangelicals and those who have a high school education or more. We find little difference between blacks and whites. Both sets of respondents split evenly on the question, though blacks are significantly more polarized on the issue with far fewer placing themselves in the "depending on the circumstances" middle ground.

Although we might hypothesize that opposition to abortion would be higher among Catholic evangelicals, we see little difference between Catholics and Protestants; however, like blacks, Catholics appear to be more polarized on the subject. Both Methodists and high-status Protestant denomination evangelicals are more supportive of abortion than are Catholics or other types of Protestants.

Evangelical men and evangelical women who do not work outside the home hold very similar views on abortion. Both are split on the subject, with about 30% believing abortion should be outlawed and between 20%-25% favoring legalization under all circumstances. *Women who work outside the home, however, are much more supportive of legalized abortion.* Twice as many employed evangelical women favor complete legalization as complete prohibition. Clearly, then, it is inappropriate to discuss abortion as a male-female issue, and more appropriate to discuss it as an issue which cuts across gender depending on life circumstance. We know that women who do not work outside of the home tend to be older and to have completed fewer years of education than their younger counterparts who do work outside the home. Thus, a partial explanation for the employment-based differences among females relates to the demographic differences between these groups. It is also plausible to assume that the working woman has somewhat different views on the impact of children in her life, and therefore may have reached a "functional" position which dictates a more tolerant attitude towards abortion and towards women whose life circumstances may induce them to consider terminating their pregnancy in this manner.

Religious evangelicals are much more likely to oppose abortion than are evangelicals who are less religious. For example, respondents who say they seldom or never attend religious services are quite supportive of legalized abortion under any circumstances, while few evangelicals who attend services several times a week hold the same view[1]. Similarly, born-again evangelicals, Biblical literalists and those who say religion is "very important" in their daily lives also are markedly pro-life. Interestingly, self-described fundamentalists and non-fundamentalists hold very similar views on abortion.

While evangelicals are split on whether or not abortions should be available, there is much more agreement on the question of government funding of abortions for women at or below the poverty level. Respondents oppose funding by a margin of two-to-one (60.7%-30.3%), with a large 48.3% saying that they are "strongly" opposed to such a program.

Opposition to government funding of abortions appears among all age, education, income and occupation subsamples. However, younger voters tend to be relatively more supportive of such a program, and those evangelicals with less than a high school degree are more likely to be opposed to government funding. Women employed outside the home are more likely to support government aid for abortions than are either men or women who remain at home. But again, even working women oppose government funds by about twenty percentage points.

There is a clear and direct relationship between a number of religious variables and opposition to government-paid abortions. Evangelicals who attend religious services more than once each week are three and one-half times more likely to oppose abortion funding than are evangelicals who seldom or never attend services. In addition, respondents who say religion is extremely important in their daily lives and those who believe that the Bible is true are much more likely to oppose government funds for abortion. Born-agains are also more likely to oppose government funds than are non-born-agains, though the margin of difference is not as great as with the other "religious" variables. Two variables, self-described fundamentalism and awareness of "Sword of the Lord" are not significant.

While there are no apparent large differences between Protestants and Catholics, two types of Protestant denominations—high-status denominations and conservative denominations—are strongly different in their responses. High-status Protestant respondents (Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Congregationalists) actually *support* government funding of abortions for poor women (47%-40%). On the other hand, an overwhelming 72.3% of conservative denomination evangelicals oppose such funding.

In summary, while we have seen that evangelicals are split on the legality of abortion, there is general agreement that government funds should not be used to pay for abortions for those who cannot afford them. Opposition to government funding crosses virtually all demographic categories. However, high-status denomination evangelicals swim against the current on this issue.

Table 5.9. Abortion

"Now I'd like to read you a series of statements people have made on the issue of abortion. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with what they have said. . . . "

(1) "Abortion should not be legally available in the U.S. for any reasons."
(2) "Abortion should be legally available for any adult woman who desires it."
(3) "The government should provide poverty level women with aid for abortions."

All Respondents	**Illegal-All Circumstances 27.3%**	**Legal/Illegal—Depending on Circumstances 39.1%**	**Legal—All Circumstances 28.7%**	**Unsure 4.9%**	**n = 1000**
Race					
Black	37.1	26.8	35.1	1.0	97
White	26.0	44.5	24.1	5.4	871
Other	34.4	25.0	37.5	3.1	32
Gender					
Male	28.6	39.8	25.8	5.8	399
Female/At Home	31.9	40.0	21.6	6.5	310
Female/Employed	20.6	37.1	40.2	2.1	291
Age					
18-24	20.7	32.8	44.0	2.6	116
25-34	19.4	42.7	32.9	5.0	222
25-44	23.5	42.3	28.3	5.9	187
45-54	27.0	43.9	27.0	2.1	141
55-64	30.1	40.4	23.7	5.8	156
65 +	42.9	30.4	20.2	6.5	168
No Answer	50.0	30.0	10.0	10.0	10

	Illegal-All Circumstances	Legal/Illegal—Depending on Circumstances	Legal—All Circumstances	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	27.3%	39.1%	28.7%	4.9%	1000
Education					
No High School Degree	44.1	37.9	14.3	3.7	161
High School Grad	26.7	28.1	41.3	3.9	330
Some College	24.3	37.0	32.2	6.5	292
College Grad	17.2	42.1	33.8	6.9	145
Grad School	25.0	44.4	29.2	1.4	72
Total Family Income					
Under $10,000	37.7	37.6	20.0	4.7	85
$10,000-$19,999	36.5	38.9	20.1	4.5	244
$20,000-$29,999	26.1	37.6	30.8	5.5	253
$30,000-$39,999	19.5	44.3	33.3	2.9	174
$40,000 +	18.2	36.3	37.7	7.8	154
Refused	26.7	38.9	31.1	3.3	90
Denomination					
Baptist	27.7	39.5	27.0	5.8	274
Methodist	15.8	44.2	35.8	4.2	120
Lutheran	24.6	46.2	24.6	4.6	65
High-Status Denom.	21.5	26.2	44.6	7.7	65
Conservative Denom.	30.7	44.5	21.2	3.6	137
Catholic	32.1	37.2	26.1	4.6	218
Other	24.1	44.9	27.6	3.4	58
None Specified	34.9	24.0	36.5	4.6	63
Religion					
Protestant	25.7	41.2	24.4	3.8	669
Catholic	32.2	36.2	34.6	6.4	230
Other	26.7	39.6	30.7	3.0	101
Frequency of Church Attendance					
Several Times/Week	44.9	40.9	12.2	2.0	196
Once per Week	26.4	43.6	24.3	5.7	440
Nearly Every Week	21.7	34.4	35.5	8.4	166
Once per Month	22.2	29.2	45.8	2.8	72
Seldom/Never	13.5	32.5	50.8	3.2	126
Born-Again?					
Yes	30.6	41.2	24.4	3.8	578
No	22.8	36.2	34.6	6.4	422
Creation Story in Bible					
Literally True	33.1	38.2	24.0	4.7	405
True Account	26.2	44.4	26.2	3.2	370
Man's Feelings	18.3	32.8	40.0	8.9	180
Don't Know	20.0	26.7	48.9	4.4	45
Importance of Religion					
Extremely	37.2	41.0	18.1	3.7	403
Very	23.2	39.4	31.8	5.6	396
Somewhat	15.4	34.8	43.8	6.0	201

All Respondents	Illegal-All Circumstances 27.3%	Legal/Illegal— Depending on Circumstances 39.1%	Legal—All Circumstances 28.7%	Unsure 4.9%	n = 1000
Fundamentalist?					
Yes	25.9	40.6	32.5	1.0	197
No	27.4	38.4	28.0	6.2	649
Unsure	28.6	40.3	26.6	4.5	154

All Respondents	Favor Government Aid for Abortions 30.3%	Oppose Government Aid for Abortions 60.7%	Unsure 9.0%	n = 1000
Age				
18-24	44.0	52.6	3.5	116
25-34	36.0	59.0	5.0	222
35-44	29.4	63.6	7.0	187
45-54	27.7	64.5	7.8	141
55-64	28.2	60.3	11.5	156
65 +	19.1	62.5	18.5	168
No Answer	20.0	60.0	20.0	10
Education				
No High School Degree	23.0	65.8	11.2	161
High School Grad	32.1	60.6	7.3	330
Some College	31.5	59.6	8.9	292
College Grad	34.5	55.2	10.3	145
Grad School	25.0	65.3	9.7	72
Gender				
Male	29.6	60.7	9.8	399
Female/At Home	26.5	64.5	9.0	310
Female/Employed	35.4	56.7	7.9	291
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several times/Week	14.8	79.6	5.6	196
Once per Week	27.3	63.6	9.1	440
Nearly every Week	38.0	52.4	9.6	166
Once per Month	36.1	55.6	8.3	72
Seldom/Never	51.6	34.9	13.5	126
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	20.1	72.0	7.9	403
Very	34.3	55.8	9.9	396
Somewhat	42.8	47.8	9.5	201
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	27.7	63.7	8.6	405
True Account	26.0	64.9	9.2	370
Man's Feelings	41.1	51.1	7.8	180
Don't Know	46.7	37.8	15.6	45
Born-Again?				
Yes	27.2	65.4	7.4	578
No	34.6	54.3	11.1	422

All Respondents	**Favor Government Aid for Abortions 30.3%**	**Oppose Government Aid for Abortions 60.7%**	**Unsure 9.0%**	**n = 1000**
Religion				
Protestant	28.3	62.6	9.1	669
Catholic	33.9	56.5	9.6	230
Other	35.6	57.4	6.9	101
Denomination				
Baptist	26.6	64.6	8.8	274
Methodist	30.8	58.3	10.8	120
Lutheran	24.6	64.6	10.8	65
High-Status Denom.	47.7	40.0	12.3	65
Conservative Denom.	23.4	72.3	4.4	137
Catholic	33.9	56.4	9.6	218
Other	34.5	58.6	6.9	58
None Specified	31.8	57.1	11.1	63

Conclusion

The so-called social issues have traditionally generated a great deal of emotion. Supporters and opponents of legalized abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment and tuition tax credits approach these topics with unbridled zeal, making them controversial and periodically highly visible. Evangelicals are also extremely interested in these public policy issues. As noted in Chapter III, evangelicals see questions of morality—including prayer in school, abortion and pornography–-as of great importance today. Like other Americans, they are concerned about the economy and about war and peace, but they are apparently more interested than other Americans in these social issues.

On particular public policy questions, evangelicals favor voluntary prayer in the public schools and tuition tax credits, but they also favor the Equal Rights Amendment and the dissemination of birth control information in the public schools. A majority also disagree that the AIDS epidemic is a divine punishment of homosexuals. Evangelicals split evenly on the question of whether to ban abortions completely or legalize them on demand. A plurality would allow abortions only under certain circumstances. On the question of government funding of poverty level women seeking abortions, evangelicals are opposed to such funding by a margin of two-to-one. These are not the sort of issue stances that can be easily characterized as either liberal or conservative, and they suggest that many in the evangelical community deal with these controversial issues individually rather than as part of an overall ideological approach.

A few especially interesting points emerge from an analysis of the subsamples. First, those evangelicals who say that they attend religious services "several times each week" prove to be particularly conservative. They are one of only two subsamples to see AIDS as divine punishment and they are the least supportive of the subsamples of the ERA. Almost four times as many favor outlawing abortion completely when given a choice of complete legality or complete illegality. Two other religious subsamples identify relatively conservative respondents. Those from conservative denominations and those who say religion is "extremely important" in their everyday lives prove to be more conservative on a variety of social issues than do other religious categories.

Second, evangelicals who are members of mainline Protestant churches (including Methodists, Lutherans and high-status denominations) prove to be relatively liberal on many social issues. High-status Protestants, in particular, are less likely to hold the views of their down-scale evangelical colleagues. They are relatively less supportive of school prayer (though 65% supported it), are split evenly on tuition tax credits, strongly back the Equal Rights Amendment and the dissemination of birth control information in the public schools, and tend to favor legalized abortion. By a margin of more than four-to-one, they disagree with the statement that AIDS is a divine punishment of the homosexual lifestyle. Methodists and Lutherans generally reflect the views of high-status respondents, though they are frequently a few percentage points less liberal.

Third, Catholics tend to be conservative on two issues: abortion and tuition tax credits. But on other issues they prove to be very liberal. Catholic support for tuition tax credits is not surprising, since Catholic parochial schools would be the obvious beneficiaries of such a tax credit. Similarly, on abortion, it is not surprising to find Catholic support for what has been a strongly enunciated position of the Church. But on other issues, Catholics are noticeably more likely to agree with high-status Protestants than with the more conservative Protestant respondents. For example, Catholic evangelicals are more supportive of the Equal Rights Amendment than are respondents from other religious subsamples. (This suggests that opponents of an Equal Rights Amendment might make gains by linking the amendment to legalized abortion.)

Demographically, evangelicals split on these issues along age, income and education. As a general rule, older respondents and those with less formal education and lower total family incomes tend to adopt more conservative positions. They are more likely to oppose legal abortions and the dissemination of birth control information in the schools. They are also more likely to see AIDS as a divine punishment and to favor prayer in the public schools. Younger evangelicals (particularly those 18-24 years of age), those with greater incomes, and those with higher levels of education tend to be more liberal on a number of social issues. The only clear exceptions to this general rule concern the Equal Rights Amendment and tuition tax credits. Lower income evangelicals strongly support the ERA (64.7% in favor), while those earning over $40,000 per year are least supportive. On tuition tax credits, two age groups—those 25-34 and those 45-54—are most supportive.

Two other variables stand out. Black evangelicals prove to be much more liberal than whites. They oppose tuition tax credits and strongly favor the Equal

Rights Amendment and birth control information in the public schools. Women who hold jobs outside the home also prove to be much more liberal than women who do not work outside the home. Differences between the two groups are particularly large concerning the ERA, birth control information in the schools, and abortion. Blacks and women who work outside the home have certain attitudes, perceptions or values which lead them to be relatively consistent in their social liberalism, though this does not extend to all issues. For example, both groups strongly support prayer in school. (This could be evidence, of course, that prayer in the public schools is not an ideological issue in the way that defense spending is.) But on most controversial issues which arouse ideological ire, black evangelicals and evangelical women who work outside the home display clearly liberal sympathies.

One of the most important conclusions to be reached from the data considered in this chapter concerns the important and strong relationship between measures of depth of religion and religious conviction and position on these issues. Attendance at religious services and self-reported importance of religion in one's daily life are excellent predictors of how an evangelical stands on these issues. These "social" issues all have some moral or religious aspect to them, and our evangelical respondents apparently do in fact directly relate their own personal religious convictions to their attitudes.

In Chapter VII of this volume, we will consider these data in a slightly different format, and ponder the implications they have for an overall assessment of the relationship between politics and religion in this country today.

Footnote

1. For a similar conclusion, see Lucky M. Tedrow and E. R. Mahoney, "Trends in Attitudes Toward Abortion: 1972-1976," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 43 (Summer, 1979): 187. While Tedrow and Mahoney found that "Protestants were consistently more liberal than Catholics" (p. 186), we found little differences on the issue between Protestant and Catholic evangelicals.

Donald Granberg and Beth Wellman Granberg also found that the more religious one is, the more likely one is to oppose legalized abortion. As they note, "religiousness among most Protestants and Catholics exerts a statistically significant and strong influence on abortion attitudes." "Abortion Attitudes, 1965-1980: Trends and Determinants," *Family Planning Perspectives* 12 (September/October 1980): 258.

SECTION 3

Evangelicals and the Political Process

Chapter VI
Political Behavior

Party Registration and Voting Habits

Identification with a political party in this country is a phenomenon which has been the subject of considerable scholarly inquiry through the years. A good deal of that effort has been expended in the attempt to pinpoint the identifiable variables which best predict the party identification of a given voter. The most commonly utilized predictive variables include the party of one's parents, the early party identification of the voter, socioeconomic indicators, race, gender and other demographic variables.

One primary reason that partisan identification has been considered important is that it in turn has been generally identified as the single best predictor of an individual's vote in partisan elections. In most theories of voting, the party identification of the individual voter forms the starting point with which all other explanations for a vote deviate.

The primary intent of the present study is to identify the relationship among measures of the religious attitudes, convictions, and behaviors of the voter and his or her political attitudes and behaviors—including partisan identification. In the first section of this chapter, we will look directly at measures of partisan identification. We will see if our overall evangelical sample differs from the general American voting public on partisan identification measures, and if we can detect relationships between partisanship and the various measures of religiosity and fundamentalism we have introduced as part of this study.

During July and August of 1983 the Gallup organization conducted several nationwide surveys which included a total of 7,669 personal interviews. One of the questions asked was, "Do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?" Gallup found that 45% of respondents said they considered themselves Democrats, while 25% called themselves Republicans and 30% labeled themselves Independents.

The current study of 1000 evangelicals was fielded at approximately the same time. But while Gallup asked what people "consider" themselves, we asked two different questions about partisan leanings: one about party registration and another about "usual" voting behavior. A majority of evangelicals in our sample, 52.9%, say that they are registered Democrats, while 33.3% say that they have registered as Republicans. Slightly fewer evangelicals usually vote Democratic, but the Democrats still hold a fifteen percentage point lead over the Republicans in usual voting behavior, with 47.1% of evangelicals usually voting Democratic and 32.3% usually casting their lot for Republican candidates.

Black evangelicals in our sample are—as would be predicted by the "conventional wisdom"—overwhelmingly Democratic in self-reported voting behavior. Similarly, black evangelicals are almost exclusively Democratic in their reported registration:

Table 6.1. Usual Vote and Registration by Race

	Usual Vote			Registration	
	Dem.	**Ticket-split**	**Repub.**	**Dem.**	**Repub.**
White evangelicals	42%	22%	36%	48%	37%
Black evangelicals	89%	7%	4%	88%	6%

Thus, we see that our sample of white evangelicals are slightly more Republican than the overall sample due to the strong Democratic orientation of black evangelicals.

A Tarrance & Associates nationwide survey of registered voters fielded in January, 1984 found a "usual voting behavior" ratio of 47% Democratic, 33% Republican, and 20% ticket-splitter. Thus, in comparison to both the Gallup survey and to the more recent nationwide survey done by Tarrance & Associates, we find that our overall evangelical sample is generally similar in party voting to the country as a whole. White evangelicals are slightly more Republican in their orientation, as would be predicted (white subsamples of any nationwide study will be more Republican than a total sample which includes black voters).

We turn now to an investigation of the relationship between this study's measures of religiosity and fundamentalism, and partisanship. Are identifiable sub-groups of evangelicals significantly more Democratic or Republican in orientation than other evangelicals? *Our overall answer to this important question is a perhaps surprising "no"*. With one or two exceptions, we find that party identification among our evangelicals is strongly related to various demographic measures, as we would expect, but that there is no *independent* impact of a person's religiosity or fundamentalism (as measured in this study) and his or her party identification. We will amplify on these points in the paragraphs which follow.

An examination of the table on page 87 shows the weak to non-existing bivariate relationships between measures of "strength of religion" and fundamentalism and both of our measures of partisanship (party registration and self-reported usual voting behavior).

Self-described fundamentalists are only three percentage points more Republican in registration than non-fundamentalists, and born-agains are one percentage point more Republican than non-born-agains. Biblical literalists tend to be slightly more *Democratic* in registration than other evangelicals.

The same relationships hold true when evangelicals are asked whether they vote generally for more Republicans or more Democrats. Just under a majority of evangelicals, 41.1%, respond that they usually vote Democratic, while less than one-third, 32.3%, generally vote Republican. This Democratic preference holds for fundamentalists, born-agains and all of the other religious variables, including evangelicals who attend religious services several times per week.

If party registration is not directly related to religiosity, which variables contribute to partisanship? Not surprisingly, the traditionally important variables of education, occupation, income and race explain the partisan division of evangelicals. Evangelicals who never graduated from high school are Democratic in registration by a margin of three-to-one, while college graduates split evenly between the parties. Similarly, white-collar evangelicals and wealthier evangelicals (many of whom have college degrees) are more likely to be registered Republicans than are their less wealthy and more blue-collar cohorts. Finally, as we have seen, blacks are Democratic by a fifteen-to-one margin (87.6%-6.2%), while whites split 48.2% Democratic to 36.9% Republican, a much closer margin.

Two other variables are of note when explaining partisanship among evangelicals. First, Democratic registration is highest in three regions—South Atlantic, East/South Central and West/South Central—which encompass states stretching from Delaware and Maryland in the East to Texas in the West and from West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Oklahoma down to the Gulf Coast states. These are traditional Democratic areas, suggesting that long-time partisan attachments explain evangelical preferences for the Democratic Party. The Republicans, on the other hand, hold their own in registration in the Northeast and Midwest, and to a lesser extent in the Mountain and Pacific states, areas of traditional Republican strength. Second, there are obvious partisan differences among denominations. Baptists prove to be much more Democratic than other evangelicals, while Lutherans are less so.

We can look at these relationships in a slightly different fashion. Table 6.2 displays the results of a linear model procedure in which a *series* of independent variables were used to *predict* variation in party identification. (This procedure assumes that usual voting behavior—the measure of partisanship used—can be considered to have enough of an interval scale nature to make interpretation of these results meaningful. Party voting behavior is reflected by a five point scale, ranging from mostly Republicans to mostly Democrats.) The procedure used is an *analysis of covariance* technique which allows us to include as independent variables both interval level and nominal level variables. Table 6.2 reports the significance levels associated with tests of significance for each independent variable. Significance levels of .05 or less can be assumed to indicate that the variable has an *independent* relationship to usual voting behavior. The nature or direction of that relationship is obtainable from the basic bivariate cross-tabulations.

We see that only four variables have an independent relationship to usual voting behavior, based on this procedure. Educational level and the race of the voter are the best predictors of voting behavior (F-test for significance .0001 or less). Voters with lower levels of education are most likely to vote Democratic. Voters who are black are most likely to vote Democratic. These relationships apparently are fundamental and independent. The sex of the voter also has an independent impact. Females, particularly employed females, are more Democratic than males.

Only one measure of religiosity has an independent impact on usual voting behavior within our sample: self-reported identification of the fundamentalist publication *Sword of The Lord*. The 17% of the sample who have heard of this publication are more Democratic than those who have not.

Table 6.2. Analysis of Covariance

Variable	Usual Voting Behavior	Political Ideology
Education	*.0001*	.9100
Attend Religious Services	.5887	.1048
Importance/Religion	.8835	*.0094*
Work/Occupation	.1021	.4071
Income	.8572	.7777
Sex	*.0042*	*.0007*
Age	.4691	.1219
Race	*.0001*	.1858
Born Again?	.1650	.3945
Bible Literal?	.7575	.2238
Fundamentalist?	.7681	*.0010*
Sword of The Lord ID?	*.0142*	.3325
Geographic Location	.1672	.3413
Denomination	.1036	.1272
	R^2=.167455	R^2=.098198

Thus, in general, we can say that the religiosity or fundamentalism of the voter is *not* independently related to his or her general partisan identification. In other words, *the underlying or fundamental predisposition to vote Republican or to vote Democratic is based on the more mundane variables of education, race and gender (and other variables not measured in this study)—rather than the more attitudinal variables associated with religion.*

Nevertheless, of course, we assume that given candidates in given races are able to mobilize or activate voters based on their religious feelings. What these data suggest is that a particular Democratic or Republican candidate will *not* have a natural or built-in edge *based on his party alone* with these religious voters. (In the sections of this chapter which follow, and in the remaining chapters of this volume, we will investigate these relationships in more detail.)

About 62% of our total evangelical sample consider themselves "conservative" in their political orientation, 27% consider themselves "liberal," and about 10% consider themselves "moderate" or don't know what to call themselves.

There are not great differences by our measures of religiosity in self-reported ideology. Only self-reported fundamentalists (76% conservative) are substantially above the evangelical sample average in their conservatism. Born-agains (66%), Biblical literalists (62%), those who say that religion is extremely important in their lives (68%), and those who attend church services several times a week (68%) are only slightly deviant from what we find for the total sample of evangelicals.

Evangelicals in 1980 and 1982

Any post-election survey encounters problems in trying to find out how people voted on election day. These problems are compounded if the election occurred many months earlier or if the campaign was relatively low key.[1] Nevertheless, we felt that the value of such retrospective data was great enough to warrant its inclusion. We constructed a set of questions which described the political landscape at the time of the 1980 presidential election and the 1982 congressional elections and asked respondents whether they remembered how they voted.

A plurality of 44.1% of evangelicals say that they voted for Ronald Reagan in 1980, while only 32.7% say they cast their vote for incumbent Democrat Jimmy Carter. One-fifth to one-quarter of our sample either could not remember for whom they voted, refused to provide the information or said they had not voted. Looking *only* at those who told us how they voted, Reagan beat Carter 57.4%-42.6% among the total sample, 55.8%-44.2% among born-agains and 60.3%-39.7% among fundamentalists.

White evangelicals reported a Reagan to Carter ratio of 49% to 29% (with the remaining 23% unable to remember voting or for whom they voted). Black evangelicals were heavily for Carter: 66% Carter, 5% Reagan, with 29% failing to remember voting or for whom they voted. Including only those who could recall for whom they voted gives us a white evangelical vote of 63% Reagan to 37% Carter, and a black evangelical vote of 93% Carter to 7% Reagan.

A *New York Times*/CBS exit poll taken immediately after the 1980 election showed Reagan beating Carter 61%-34% among white, born-again Protestants, and an ABC exit poll showed a similar 59%-33% win for Reagan. The results for our white evangelical sample are thus comparable to the networks' exit poll samples.

Just *over half* of the evangelical sample (544 respondents out of 1000) say they voted in 1982, remember how they voted and are willing to tell the interviewer for whom they cast their ballots. This time, a slight plurality say they voted Democratic (28.7) rather than Republican (25.7) for Congress in 1982.

Among white evangelicals, the margin was slightly Republican, with 29% reporting voting for the Republican candidate, and with 26% reporting having voted for the Democratic candidate. Black evangelicals did not waver in their support for Democrats, with 51% of black evangelicals in our sample saying they voted for the Democratic congressional candidate in 1982, and with only 3% reporting having voted for a Republican candidate.

Even when we recognize that these percentages include some recall error, the data suggest quite strongly that a sizable number of evangelical voters voted for Ronald Reagan in 1980 but crossed back into the Democratic column two years later. The same trend holds true for fundamentalists, Biblical literalists, born-agains and those respondents who say they are very religious. While our data indicate that Ronald Reagan won these groups by margins of anywhere from 3% to 17%, the Republican nominees for Congress two years later did much more poorly with our sample. In fact, born-agains, Biblical literalists and the very religious all preferred Democratic congressional candidates, while fundamentalists split evenly between the parties' House candidates. We cannot know for certain whether evangelicals and other subsamples returned back to the Democratic Party because of dissatisfaction with the Reagan administration or simply because Ronald Reagan, the ticket-splitting attraction, was not on the ticket in 1982. And since voters in off-year elections invariably turn against the party which controls the White House, there is no reason to be surprised that evangelicals, Biblical literalists and the other categories would not exhibit the

Table 6.3. Voting Behavior, 1980 and 1982

	1980			
	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Unimportant
All Evangelicals	8%	16%	28%	47%
White Evangelicals	7	15	28	48
Black Evangelicals	15	25	23	35

	1982			
	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Unimportant
All Evangelicals	6%	12%	30%	50%
White Evangelicals	6	11	30	51
Black Evangelicals	9	17	31	41

Table 6.4. Party Registration, Ideology and Usual Vote

	Registration			Ideology			Usual Votes			
	Rep	Dem	Ind	Conserv	Mod	Lib	Rep	Dem	Ticket-Split	n =
All Respondents	33.3%	52.9%	11.4%	61.8%	11.0%	27.2%	32.2%	47.1%	20.6%	1000
Fundamentalist?										
Yes	36.0	49.2	12.2	76.1	5.1	18.8	36.6	44.2	19.3	197
No	33.0	53.3	11.6	59.9	10.0	30.1	31.9	47.3	20.8	649
Unsure	31.2	55.8	9.7	51.3	22.7	26.0	28.6	50.0	21.4	154
Born-Again?										
Yes	33.7	52.9	10.6	65.6	11.4	23.0	32.9	47.2	19.9	578
No	32.7	52.8	12.6	56.6	10.4	32.9	31.5	46.9	21.6	422
Creation Story in Bible										
Literally True	32.1	56.5	8.9	61.7	14.8	23.5	27.7	50.1	22.2	405
True Account	34.3	48.9	14.1	64.3	8.7	27.0	34.3	44.1	21.6	370
Man's Feelings	35.0	53.3	11.1	57.2	8.3	34.4	38.3	46.7	15.0	180
Don't Know	28.9	51.1	13.3	60.0	6.7	33.0	33.3	46.7	20.0	45
Importance of Religion										
Extremely	33.5	54.6	10.2	67.7	10.7	21.6	30.8	47.6	21.6	403
Very	34.6	50.0	12.1	59.6	11.9	28.5	34.4	45.7	19.7	396
Somewhat	30.4	55.2	12.4	54.2	10.0	35.8	30.9	48.8	20.4	201
Church Attendance										
Several Times a Week	28.6	56.1	13.3	68.4	14.8	16.8	28.6	51.5	19.9	196
Once per Week	35.9	50.7	11.1	65.7	8.9	25.5	33.6	43.6	22.7	440
Nearly Every Week	30.7	58.4	7.2	59.0	9.0	31.9	31.3	50.0	18.7	166
Once per Month	29.2	54.2	13.9	47.2	12.5	40.3	31.9	52.8	15.3	72
Seldom/Never	37.3	47.6	13.5	50.0	14.3	35.7	34.9	45.2	19.8	126
Denomination										
Baptist	25.9	63.9	8.0	65.7	13.5	20.8	25.6	57.7	16.8	274
Methodist	35.8	50.8	12.5	59.2	10.8	30.0	35.0	45.0	20.0	120
Lutheran	40.0	36.9	21.5	70.8	3.1	26.2	44.6	40.0	15.4	65
High-Status Denom.	38.5	47.7	13.9	69.2	10.8	20.0	41.5	38.5	20.0	65
Conservative Denom.	36.5	46.7	12.4	65.0	14.6	20.4	35.0	40.2	24.8	137
Catholic	33.0	54.1	10.1	56.0	7.3	36.7	30.7	48.2	21.1	218
Other	32.8	51.7	12.1	55.2	13.8	31.0	27.6	53.5	19.0	58
None Specified	42.9	41.3	12.7	52.4	11.1	36.5	38.1	27.0	34.9	63

Note: Tables exclude "don't know" and "no answer" responses.

Table 6.5. Political Party Registration (selected demographic variables)

Age	Republican	Democratic	Independent	Don't Know	n =
18-24	34.5	50.0	10.3	5.2	116
25-34	32.0	50.9	15.8	1.4	222
35-44	33.7	52.4	11.8	2.1	187
45-54	29.8	58.9	9.9	1.4	141
55-64	32.1	57.1	8.3	2.6	156
65 +	38.1	48.8	10.7	2.4	168
Refused	30.0	60.0	0.0	10.0	10
Income					
Under $10,000	27.1	52.9	12.9	7.1	85
$10,000-$19,999	32.0	54.9	11.9	1.2	244
$20,000-$29,999	30.8	53.8	13.0	2.4	253
$30,000-$39,999	35.6	53.5	10.9	0.0	174
$40,000 +	41.6	48.1	9.7	0.7	154
Refused	31.1	52.2	7.8	8.9	90
Education					
No High School	21.7	64.6	8.7	5.0	161
High School Grad	30.3	56.1	10.3	3.3	330
Some College	37.3	49.0	13.0	0.7	292
College Grad	44.1	44.8	9.7	1.4	145
Grad School	34.7	44.4	19.4	1.4	72
Race					
Black	6.2	87.6	3.1	3.1	97
White	36.9	48.2	12.6	2.3	871
Other	18.8	75.0	3.1	3.1	32
Region					
New Engl./Mid-Atlantic	40.8	44.6	12.3	2.3	130
East/North Central	37.4	45.8	13.1	3.7	214
West/North Central	40.3	41.9	14.5	3.2	62
South Atlantic	26.8	61.0	11.2	1.0	205
East/South Central	22.7	61.4	13.6	2.3	88
West/South Central	28.3	63.2	5.9	2.6	152
Mountain/Pacific	38.3	48.3	11.4	2.0	149

Table 6.6. 1980 Vote

	Reagan	Carter	Didn't Vote/ Can't Recall	Refused	n =
All Respondents	**44.1%**	**32.7%**	**17.5%**	**5.7%**	**1000**
Fundamentalist?					
Yes	47.7	31.5	15.7	5.1	197
No	44.1	32.8	17.7	5.4	649
Unsure	39.6	33.8	18.8	7.8	154
Born-Again?					
Yes	42.6	33.7	18.5	5.2	578
No	46.2	31.3	16.1	6.4	422

All Respondents	Reagan 44.1%	Carter 32.7%	Didn't Vote/ Can't Recall 17.5%	Refused 5.7%	n = 1000
Frequency of Church Attendance					
Several Times/Week	44.9	34.7	15.3	5.1	196
Once Per Week	46.6	30.2	17.3	5.9	440
Nearly Every Week	42.2	35.5	18.7	3.6	166
Once Per Month	37.5	37.5	15.3	9.7	72
Seldom/Never	40.5	31.8	21.4	6.4	126
Importance of Religion					
Extremely	43.2	34.5	17.1	5.2	403
Very	46.5	31.8	15.4	6.3	396
Somewhat	41.3	30.9	22.4	5.5	201
Creation Story in Bible					
Literally True	40.7	37.0	17.8	4.4	405
True Account	47.8	28.9	17.3	6.0	370
Man's Feelings	46.7	30.0	16.1	7.2	180
Don't Know	33.3	35.6	22.2	8.9	45

Table 6.7. 1982 Vote

All Respondents	Republican 25.7%	Democrat 28.7%	Didn't Vote/ Can't Recall 41.9%	Refused 3.7%	n = 1000
Fundamentalist?					
Yes	26.4	26.4	40.1	7.1	197
No	26.5	29.6	41.0	2.9	649
Unsure	21.4	27.9	48.1	2.6	154
Born-Again?					
Yes	25.4	28.6	42.6	3.5	578
No	26.1	28.9	41.0	4.0	422
Frequency of Church Attendance					
Several Times/Week	23.5	31.6	41.3	3.6	196
Once Per Week	30.9	28.4	36.6	4.1	440
Nearly Every Week	20.5	29.5	47.0	3.0	166
Once Per Month	25.0	20.8	50.0	4.2	72
Seldom/Never	18.3	28.6	50.0	3.2	126
Importance of Religion					
Extremely	25.1	31.0	40.5	3.5	403
Very	27.0	27.3	41.2	4.6	396
Somewhat	24.4	26.9	46.3	2.5	201
Creation Story in Bible					
Literally True	21.7	31.4	44.2	2.7	405
True Account	28.4	28.1	38.9	4.6	370
Man's Feelings	31.7	22.8	42.2	3.3	180
Don't Know	15.6	33.3	44.7	6.7	45

same sort of behavior. But the precipitous drop in support by conservative Democrats and ticket-splitters for Republican congressional nominees (as compared with Ronald Reagan) makes it clear that Democratic candidates can draw support from evangelical voters and from the various categories of highly religious Christian voters. *These voters have long perceived themselves as Democrats, and the Republican Party must provide them with a reason to crossover and vote Republican, or many Christian voters will continue to vote Democratic*—particularly for "down ticket" races.

We have a more direct measure of the importance of religion in the two elections in 1980 and 1982. Evangelicals who reported having voted in these two elections were asked how important their religion was in their voting decision.

We see that overall, about one-fourth of all evangelicals in the sample say that religion was extremely or very important to them in their 1980 presidential vote, while less than one-fifth say that religion was extremely or very important to them in their 1982 congressional vote. Black evangelicals are slightly more likely to remember a higher importance of religion in both elections than white evangelicals.

Not surprisingly, evangelicals who can be classified as more fundamentalist or more religiously involved based on our measures are the most likely to report an extremely or very important role of religion in both elections. But—importantly—even among those individuals who are the most religious and the most fundamentalist based on our measures, the percentage who say that religion was extremely or very important in their religious voting decisions is considerably less than 50%. For example, only 29% of those born-again Christians in the sample, 41% of those who attend church several times a week, 36% of those for whom religion is very important in their daily life, 30% of self-defined fundamentalists, and 37% of those who are familiar with the fundamentalist publication *Sword of the Lord* say that religion was either extremely or very important to them in their voting decision.

Ballot Tests: Ronald Reagan and the Democrats

Our survey included hypothetical presidential match-ups between Ronald Reagan and two possible Democratic nominees, Walter Mondale and John Glenn.

In July of 1983 (when our survey was taken), Ronald Reagan was favored by 47.0% of evangelicals, while Walter Mondale drew 33.8%. The remaining 19.2% said they were undecided. A Gallup poll taken about two weeks after our survey found Reagan with only the narrowest 44%-42% lead over Mondale among the general public. Although it is difficult to compare across surveys, it appears that evangelicals were somewhat more supportive of the President than the public at large. The ballot test between Ronald Reagan and John Glenn produced a similar pattern. Reagan bests Glenn 41.3%-37.2% among evangelicals in our survey, while Gallup finds Glenn ahead 45%-41%. Again, evangelicals are more supportive of Reagan than is the Gallup sample. As can be seen, Reagan performed better against Mondale than against Glenn among evangelicals and the general public in the summer of 1983.

Black evangelicals, of course, show almost no support for Reagan in either ballot test, supporting Mondale by a 75% to 6% margin, and supporting Glenn by a 68% to 6% margin. Among white evangelicals, Reagan wins over Mondale by a 52% to 29% margin, and he wins over Glenn by a 45% to 34% margin. (The Gallup data we have been using for comparison include whites *and* blacks, of course.)

Ronald Reagan's margins over Walter Mondale and John Glenn are somewhat larger among self-described fundamentalists than among evangelicals as a whole. However, Reagan does not do significantly better among other categories of more religious or fundamentalist voters in our sample. His margin among born-agains, frequent church/religious service attendees and those who say religion is "extremely important" in their daily lives is not significantly better than among evangelicals in general. His margin among Biblical literalists, who constitute 40.5% of our sample, is actually much smaller, and he trails John Glenn among that group 41.7%-35.8%.

Thus, the religious variable which best relates to support for the re-election of President Reagan is self-reported fundamentalism, and even among this group the support for Reagan is only marginally stronger than the support found among the total sample. The one religious variable which best relates to *lack of* support for Reagan is the test for belief in a literal Bible. There is strong evidence to suggest, however, that his relationship is the result of the relative educational level of those who believe in a literal Bible, which, as we have seen, is disproportionately low. Lower levels of completed education are also related to a Democratic vote.

In short, based on these data collected in the summer of 1983, President Reagan did not have an overwhelming or strongly disproportionate lead among those individuals in this country who have been considered by some observers to be his natural constituency—those with more fundamentalist religious beliefs and leanings. The *potential* for the President to convert these individuals to a stronger re-elect position for his candidacy by November of 1984 will be discussed in Chapter VII.

The relatively low level of Reagan's support among evangelicals is perhaps a bit surprising, since almost 62% of respondents define themselves as conservatives. Almost one-quarter of self-described conservatives opt for Mondale and almost one-fifth are undecided. Mondale, on the other hand, draws 50% of self-defined liberals, with Reagan preferred by 33.8%. Moderates prefer Mondale 44.6%-31.8%, while a sizable 23.6% remain undecided. John Glenn, whose campaign experienced trouble in the early months of 1984, could have been a stronger challenger to Reagan among conservative and moderate evangelicals, and in our survey he maintains Mondale's lead over Reagan among liberal evangelicals.

Table 6.8. Reagan-Mondale Ballot Test

All Respondents	**Reagan** **47.0%**	**Mondale** **33.8%**	**Undecided** **19.2%**	**n =** **1000**
Fundamentalist?				
Yes	52.3	32.0	15.7	197
No	47.2	33.9	19.0	649
Unsure	39.6	35.7	24.7	154
Born-Again?				
Yes	47.1	32.5	20.4	578
No	46.9	35.6	17.5	422
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/week	45.4	28.1	26.5	196
Once per week	48.2	35.5	16.4	440
Nearly Every week	47.6	34.3	18.1	166
Once per Month	40.3	40.3	19.4	72
Seldom/Never	48.4	32.5	19.1	126
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	47.4	33.8	18.9	403
Very	47.2	34.6	18.2	396
Somewhat	45.8	32.3	21.9	201
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	41.0	36.5	22.5	405
True Account	52.2	32.2	15.7	370
Man's Feelings	52.8	30.6	16.7	180
Don't Know	35.6	35.6	28.9	45
Ideology				
Conservative	55.5	24.8	19.7	618
Moderate	31.8	44.6	23.6	110
Liberal	33.8	50.0	16.2	272
Education				
No High School Degree	28.6	49.1	22.4	161
High School Grad	40.3	35.5	24.2	330
Some College	54.8	30.8	14.4	292
College Grad	61.4	19.3	19.3	145
Grad School	58.3	33.3	8.3	72
Occupation				
Upper White-Collar	56.5	30.9	12.6	246
Lower White-Collar	62.0	23.2	14.8	108
Upper Blue-Collar	47.8	27.7	24.6	224
Lower Blue-Collar	27.4	46.2	26.5	117
Retired	42.2	40.3	17.5	211
Not in Labor Force	38.3	38.3	23.4	94
Race				
Black	6.2	75.3	18.6	97
White	51.9	28.7	19.4	871
Other	37.5	46.9	15.6	32

	Reagan	Mondale	Undecided	n =
All Respondents	**47.0%**	**33.8%**	**19.2%**	**1000**
Religion				
Protestant	49.0	32.3	18.7	669
Catholic	43.0	37.4	19.6	230
Other	42.6	35.6	21.8	101
Age				
18-24	50.9	37.1	12.1	116
25-34	47.8	32.9	19.4	222
35-44	50.3	32.1	17.7	187
45-54	48.9	31.2	19.9	141
55-64	36.5	35.9	27.6	156
65 +	48.2	35.1	16.7	168
Refused	40.0	30.0	30.0	10
Gender				
Male	54.9	29.1	16.0	399
Female	41.8	36.9	21.3	601
Female/At Home	44.8	34.2	21.0	310
Female/Employed	38.5	39.9	21.7	291

Table 6.9. Reagan-Glenn Ballot Test

	Reagan	Glenn	Undecided	n =
All Respondents	**41.3%**	**37.2%**	**21.5%**	**1000**
Fundamentalist?				
Yes	46.7	34.5	18.8	197
No	41.5	37.9	20.7	649
Unsure	33.8	37.7	28.6	154
Born-Again?				
Yes	40.3	36.2	23.5	578
No	42.7	38.6	18.7	422
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/week	40.3	35.2	24.5	196
Once per week	43.0	37.5	20.0	440
Nearly Every week	42.2	34.9	22.9	166
Once per Month	33.3	43.1	23.6	72
Seldom/Never	40.5	38.9	20.6	126
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	40.2	38.5	21.3	403
Very	42.7	36.1	21.2	396
Somewhat	40.8	36.8	22.4	201
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	35.8	41.7	22.5	405
True Account	44.9	34.6	20.5	370
Man's Feelings	47.2	32.8	20.0	180
Don't Know	37.8	35.6	26.7	45

	Reagan	Glenn	Undecided	n =
All Respondents	**41.3%**	**37.2%**	**21.5%**	**1000**
Ideology				
Conservative	47.9	29.8	22.3	618
Moderate	27.3	45.5	27.3	110
Liberal	32.0	50.7	17.3	272
Education				
No High School Degree	25.5	50.9	23.6	161
High School Grad	33.6	42.4	23.9	330
Some College	49.0	32.5	18.5	292
College Grad	55.2	22.8	22.1	145
Grad School	52.8	30.6	16.7	72
Occupation				
Upper White-Collar	51.6	32.9	15.5	246
Lower White-Collar	56.5	29.6	13.9	108
Upper Blue-Collar	37.5	33.0	29.5	224
Lower Blue-Collar	24.8	48.7	26.5	117
Retired	37.0	43.6	19.4	211
Not in Labor Force	36.2	38.3	25.5	94
Race				
Black	6.2	68.0	25.8	97
White	45.4	33.6	21.0	871
Other	37.5	40.6	21.9	32
Religion				
Protestant	43.1	35.7	21.2	669
Catholic	38.3	39.6	22.2	230
Other	36.6	41.6	21.8	101
Age				
18-24	44.8	39.7	15.5	116
25-34	44.6	35.1	20.3	222
35-44	41.2	36.4	22.5	187
45-54	42.6	38.3	19.2	141
55-64	31.4	39.1	29.5	156
65 +	43.5	36.3	20.2	168
Refused	30.0	40.0	30.0	10
Gender				
Male	48.6	33.8	17.5	399
Female	36.4	39.4	24.1	601
Female/At Home	39.4	37.4	23.2	310
Female/Employed	33.3	41.6	25.1	291

Demographics

Reagan tends to do better among wealthier and more highly educated evangelicals. This comes as no surprise, since Republicans generally find their greatest level of support among that constituency. White-collar evangelicals, whites and Protestants give Reagan solid margins, while Mondale and Glenn generally do better among blue-collar evangelicals, blacks and Catholics. Again, none of this is unexpected. Reagan holds a thirteen to eighteen percentage point lead against Mondale and a four-to-ten point lead against Glenn among all age groups except one—evangelicals 55-64 years of age. Among that age group, Mondale holds Reagan to a stand off and Glenn beats Reagan by almost eight points.

Much has been made of the so-called gender gap, and our data indicate quite clearly that there are male-female differences among evangelicals and that those differences are particularly great between evangelical men and evangelical women *employed outside the home*. Ronald Reagan holds a twenty-five point lead over Walter Mondale among men and a much smaller four point edge among women. (Working women actually split evenly between the two candidates, while the President carries non-working women by ten percentage points.) Against John Glenn, Reagan carries evangelical men 48.8%-33.8% but loses evangelical women 39.5%-36.3%. While Reagan splits non-working women with Mondale, the President loses employed women 41.6%-33.3%. Clearly Mondale, Glenn and Reagan each has his own gender gap, doing better among the prospective voters of one sex than the other. The most important distinction is between the attitudes of men and *working* women.

Looked at differently, we can say that the candidates have various levels of dependence on certain sexes. For example, while 52.3% of Reagan's supporters against Mondale are women, 65.7% of Mondale's backers are women. Against Glenn, 52.8% of Reagan's supporters are women while 63.7% of Glenn's are female. Thus, while Reagan's base of support is composed almost equally of men and women, both Mondale and Glenn depended inordinately (almost two-to-one) on women.

In summary, when compared with nationwide samples, evangelicals appear slightly more inclined during the summer of 1983 to support Ronald Reagan for reelection. However, those same evangelicals were more attracted to John Glenn than to Mondale, and the Ohio Democrat runs much better against the President than does Mondale. This would appear to suggest that evangelicals feel at home with a conservative Democrat, but that they can also be drawn to a conservative, personally attractive Republican.

Political Participation

While only one-half of the adult population normally votes for President of the United States, other types of political participation are even rarer. For example, the University of Michigan's 1982 National Election Study found that only 7.8% of the adult population had worn a campaign button or put a political bumper sticker on their car for the 1982 election, and only 3.2% of those responding to the survey belonged to a political club or organization.

Our evangelical sample of registered voters proves to be a politically active group. (Perhaps not surprisingly, since the sample includes only registered voters, thereby eliminating the least politically active—those who do not even register to vote.) More than one-third of evangelical respondents say that they have contributed to a political party or candidate within the past two years, more than one-fifth say they have volunteered time for a candidate or a political cause, and more than four-fifths say that they have voted in a primary. Certain political and demographic groups are more likely to have been politically active than other groups, including respondents who are wealthier, better educated and white-collar. On the other hand, young respondents (particularly those between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four years) participate at a much lower rate. Republicans are ten to twelve percentage points more likely to have contributed to a candidate than are Democrats or ticket-splitters. These data mirror participation differences among national samples.

But demographic factors are not alone in explaining different levels of political participation among evangelicals. Religiosity also appears to be involved. The data suggest that the more religious the respondent, the *less* likely he or she is to contribute to a political party or candidate. Biblical literalists, those who attend religious services several times each week and those who say that religion is extremely important in their daily lives are ten to fifteen percentage points less likely to have contributed than are those evangelicals who are less religious. However, we cannot be certain that religion is a major explanation, since Biblical literalists, for example, typically have lower levels of income, which could affect their financial ability to contribute to a political cause.

On the question of primary voting and contributing volunteer time to a candidate or political cause, the religious variables are less helpful in explaining differences among evangelicals. Biblical literalists are less likely to have volunteered time for a candidate, and those who attend religious services several times each week are less likely to have voted in a primary than are those who attended services weekly. But these small and isolated differences do not indicate a clear pattern, and it is impossible to generalize from them.

Table 6.10. Contributions to Candidates or Political Parties

	Yes	No	Don't Know	n =
All Respondents	**35.6%**	**64.3%**	**0.1%**	**1000**
Total Family Income				
Under $10,000	20.0	80.0	0.0	85
$10,000-$19,999	27.5	72.1	0.4	244
$20,000-$29,999	30.8	69.2	0.0	253
$30,000-$39,999	46.0	54.0	0.0	174
$40,000 +	55.8	44.2	0.0	154

	Yes	No	Don't Know	n =
All Respondents	**35.6%**	**64.3%**	**0.1%**	**1000**
Education				
No High School Degree	24.8	75.2	0.0	161
High School Grad	28.5	71.5	0.0	330
Some College	41.1	58.6	0.3	292
College Grad	42.8	57.2	0.0	145
Graduate School	55.6	44.4	0.0	72
Occupation				
Upper White-Collar	45.5	54.5	0.0	246
Lower White-Collar	43.5	56.5	0.0	108
Upper Blue-Collar	29.5	70.5	0.0	224
Lower Blue-Collar	35.9	64.1	0.0	117
Retired	29.9	69.7	0.5	211
Not in Labor Force	27.7	72.3	0.0	94
Age				
18-24	26.7	73.3	0.0	116
25-34	33.3	66.7	0.0	222
35-44	41.7	58.3	0.0	187
45-54	43.3	56.7	0.0	141
55-64	36.5	63.5	0.0	156
65 +	29.8	69.6	0.6	168
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	30.1	69.6	0.3	405
True Account	36.8	63.2	0.0	370
Man's Feelings	46.7	53.3	0.0	180
Don't Know	31.1	68.9	0.0	45
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	28.1	71.9	0.0	196
Once per Week	34.3	65.5	0.2	440
Nearly Every Week	44.0	56.0	0.0	166
Once per Month	40.3	59.7	0.0	72
Seldom/Never	38.1	61.9	0.0	126
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	30.3	69.5	0.3	403
Very	38.1	61.9	0.0	396
Somewhat	41.3	58.7	0.0	201

Table 6.11. Volunteered Time for a Candidate or Cause

	Yes	No	Don't Know	n =
All Respondents	**21.8%**	**78.0%**	**0.2%**	**1000**
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	18.8	81.2	0.0	405
True Account	22.4	77.0	0.5	370
Man's Feelings	28.3	71.7	0.0	180
Don't Know	17.8	82.2	0.0	45

Table 6.12. Voted in Primary

	Yes	No	Don't Know	n =
All Respondents	**81.3%**	**18.1%**	**0.6%**	**1000**
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	75.0	23.0	2.0	196
Once per Week	85.5	14.3	0.2	440
Nearly Every Week	81.9	18.1	0.0	166
Once per Month	76.4	22.2	1.4	72
Seldom/Never	78.6	21.4	0.0	126

Evangelicals' Attitudes Towards Interest Groups

Politically aware and active people frequently overestimate the penetration and influence of interest groups and public figures. Liberals, for example, have been highly critical in the past few years of the National Conservative Political Action Committee's (NCPAC) "negative" campaign tactics and about the Moral Majority, accusing them of trying to impose a particular religious and moral view on the citizenry. Similarly, some conservatives have complained again and again about the "liberal positions" of the National Education Association (NEA) and the National Organization of Women (NOW). But in spite of all the charges and countercharges, it is not always clear that the general public is paying a great deal of attention to these groups. Our survey gathered information on evangelical awareness and evaluation of four groups: NCPAC, Moral Majority, NEA and NOW. The results suggest that sizable numbers of evangelicals are unaware of even the most widely discussed and politically active of these groups, and that the evangelicals who are aware of the groups are not always favorably inclined towards them.

One-third of evangelicals sampled have little knowledge (i.e., have only heard of or are completely unfamiliar with) the Moral Majority, the National Education Association or the National Organization of Women. Only a bare majority have either a favorable or unfavorable opinion of either NEA or NOW. Only 49.2% has an opinion of Moral Majority. NCPAC, which received so much attention in the press shortly after the 1980 elections, turns out to be a virtual unknown to our sample. Three-quarters of evangelical respondents have never heard of NCPAC or have only heard the name of the organization. A minute 15.5% of those surveyed say they have an opinion of NCPAC.

Three of the groups—Moral Majority, NCPAC and NOW—have favorable to unfavorable ratios of about 1:1, with roughly equal percentages of respondents holding favorable and unfavorable opinions of each group. Only the National Education Association has a particularly good favorable-to-unfavorable ratio, with 40.8% of the sample saying they hold a positive view of the NEA and a much smaller 9.1% holding a negative opinion. Moderates and liberals are very hostile to Moral Majority, while conservatives split over the organization. Only conservative Republicans have a clearly positive opinion of Moral Majority, but the favorable/unfavorable ratio of two-to-one among these individuals is not particularly good considering the constituency. NCPAC's level of recognition is so low as to make comparisons of favorable and unfavorable responses meaningless. (Less than 16% of respondents have an opinion of the political action committee.) NOW, on the other hand, is much better known. But while it is well-regarded by liberals, both conservatives and moderates are split on their opinion. Interestingly, conservative Democrats actually have a positive opinion of NOW, while conservative Republicans are hostile. By contrast, the National Education Association is viewed favorably by all ideological and political target groups, including conservative Republicans.

Political awareness of the groups is, as we would expect, directly related to education and income. The more highly educated the subsample or the higher the respondent's total family income, the more likely the respondent is to have heard of the organization. Differences of opinion about the groups are not striking across various income groups, but education is significantly related to both NCPAC and Moral Majority. In those cases, the higher the education level of the respondent, the more the hostility displayed to the conservative groups.

Race and gender differences, which sometimes appear on political issues, are generally unimportant when respondents evaluate NCPAC and Moral Majority. Race is irrelevant for the NEA, but women employed outside the home are more supportive of the organization than are either men or women who remain at home. A similar situation arises with the National Organization of Women. While both employed women and men have favorable opinions of NOW, women who remain at home split evenly on the organization. In addition, while white evangelicals show only a slightly favorable attitude toward NOW (28.1% saying that they know NOW and view it favorably, 23.1% say they have an unfavorable opinion), black evangelicals have a favorable/unfavorable ratio of almost six-to-one in support of the organization.

Denomination and religious beliefs are not significant in explaining evangelical attitudes toward NCPAC or the NEA, but they *are* important in understanding evangelical attitudes toward Moral Majority and NOW. Baptists, Methodists and those who attend "conservative denominations" are either slightly favorable to Moral Majority or evenly split on the organization's desirability. High-status denomination evangelicals, Lutherans and Catholics hold an unfavorable view. High-status denominations and "conservative denominations" are also more hostile to NOW than are the other denominations.

Our measures of religiosity indicate that the more religious the evangelical, the more likely he or she is to view Moral Majority in a positive light and NOW negatively. Conversely, those respondents who rarely attend religious services, are not Biblical literalists and do not consider religion to be very important in their lives are more critical of Moral Majority and more supportive of NOW. Self-described fundamentalists and born-again Christians also have a more favorable view of Moral Majority and a less favorable one of NOW.

Among *no* religious group identifiable in this study, however, are we able to identify *strong* favorable support for the Moral Majority. Self-reported fundamentalists are strongest in their support for the group, with a 38% favorable rating, but even among these individuals, 26% report an unfavorable rating. If the Moral Majority has "carved out" a natural constituency in this country, it is not evident from these data. The group carries with it negative perceptual baggage that affects even those evangelicals who on religious grounds could be expected to be most favorably predisposed towards it.

Party, ideology and religiousness all seem to help explain why some evangelicals have positive impressions of a conservative group, such as Moral Majority, while others have a favorable image of a liberal group like NOW. But party, ideology and religion do not appear to be important explanatory variables when they come to NCPAC or NEA. Apparently, the former simply is not that well known and the NEA seems to have avoided an easily characterized "issue image." That is, conservatives have failed to convince even those evangelicals who could be expected to hold conservative views that the National Education Association is an "enemy" which stands for values and policies which contradict traditionally conservative and religious values. (We note that "education" is generically a positive valued commodity in this country. Many evangelicals may not be very familiar with the NEA's policy positions, but reacted favorably to the organization because of the word "Education" in its title.)

Table 6.13. Interest Groups and Evangelicals' Opinions of Them

	Never Heard Of	Heard of Only	Know/ Favorable	Know/ Unfavorable	Know/No Opinion	n =
Moral Majority	30.3%	7.8%	23.4%	25.8%	12.7%	1000
NCPAC	64.0	12.7	6.6	8.9	7.8	1000
NOW	19.7	12.8	30.4	21.3	15.8	1000
NEA	28.3	11.3	40.8	9.1	10.5	1000

	Never Heard Of	Know/ Favorable	Know/ Unfavorable	n =
Moral Majority				
Conservatives	28.2%	28.5%	24.8%	618
Moderates	46.6	6.4	20.0	110
Liberals	28.7	18.8	30.5	272
Conservative Republicans Only	15.8	37.4	27.6	252
NOW				
Conservatives	19.3	27.7	24.8	618
Moderates	33.6	20.9	16.4	110
Liberals	15.4	40.1	15.4	272
Conservative Democrats Only	23.7	32.1	17.7	249
Conservative Republicans Only	13.8	26.4	32.3	254

	Never Heard Of	Know/ Favorable	Know/ Unfavorable	n =
NEA				
Conservatives	26.4	40.1	10.8	618
Moderates	47.3	20.9	7.3	110
Liberals	25.0	50.4	5.9	272
Conservative Republicans Only	20.1	42.1	16.1	254
NCPAC				
No High School Degree	76.4	7.5	2.5	161
High School Grad	66.1	5.2	7.3	330
Some College	62.0	7.5	9.9	292
College Grad	61.4	6.2	10.3	145
Grad School	40.3	8.3	23.6	72
Moral Majority				
No High School Degree	55.9	16.8	8.7	161
High School Grad	33.0	23.6	21.5	330
Some College	23.3	26.7	30.8	292
College Grad	19.3	20.0	33.8	145
Grad School	11.1	30.6	47.2	72
NEA				
Male	25.3	41.6	12.5	399
Female/at Home	34.2	33.2	7.1	310
Female/Employed	26.1	47.8	6.5	291
NOW				
Male	19.1	31.8	22.8	399
Female/at Home	20.7	24.5	23.2	310
Female/Employed	19.6	34.7	17.2	291
NOW				
Black	17.5	46.4	8.3	97
White	19.9	28.1	23.1	871
Other	21.9	43.8	12.5	32
Moral Majority				
Baptist	40.5	23.7	19.3	274
Methodist	27.5	28.3	21.7	120
Lutheran	16.9	15.4	35.4	65
High-Status Denom.	12.3	27.7	41.6	65
Conservative Denom.	27.7	25.6	24.1	137
Catholic	30.7	17.9	30.7	218
Other	25.9	24.1	22.4	58
None Specified	31.8	30.2	25.8	63
Moral Majority				
Fundamentalists	25.8	38.1	25.9	197
Non-fundamentalists	28.5	21.4	28.4	649
Born-again	29.1	26.3	23.7	578
Non-born-again	32.0	19.4	28.7	422

	Never Heard Of	Know/ Favorable	Know/ Unfavorable	n =
Bible Literally True	40.3	19.3	19.8	405
True Account	22.4	28.4	28.4	370
Man's Feelings	23.9	22.2	36.7	180
Religion Extremely Important	31.5	26.1	23.3	403
Very Important	29.8	23.5	25.0	396
Somewhat Important	28.9	17.9	32.3	201
Attend Church				
Several Times/Week	30.1	28.1	23.0	196
Once Per Week	28.9	23.9	26.1	440
Nearly Every Week	34.3	21.7	22.9	166
Once Per Month	33.3	18.1	30.6	72
Seldom/Never	28.6	19.9	30.1	126
NOW				
Baptist	23.0	30.7	17.5	274
Methodist	19.2	28.3	17.5	120
Lutheran	15.4	29.2	20.0	65
High-Status Denom.	15.4	32.3	29.2	65
Conservative Denom.	18.3	22.6	27.7	137
Catholic	18.4	35.8	32.0	218
Other	19.0	27.6	42.1	58
NOW				
Fundamentalists	19.8	32.0	27.9	197
Non-fundamentalists	18.6	31.3	21.4	649
Born-again	20.2	25.6	23.0	578
Non-born-again	19.0	37.0	19.0	422
Bible Literally True	24.9	24.9	19.0	405
True Account	16.2	31.9	23.8	370
Man's Feelings	15.6	39.4	24.4	180
Religion Extremely Important	22.3	25.1	25.8	403
Very Important	17.4	31.8	18.4	396
Somewhat Important	18.9	38.3	17.9	201
Attend Church				
Several Times/Week	23.5	16.8	32.1	196
Once Per Week	20.0	31.8	21.1	440
Nearly Every Week	17.5	36.1	20.0	166
Once Per Month	13.9	36.1	8.3	72
Seldom/Never	19.1	35.7	14.3	126

Conclusion

The data indicate quite clearly that evangelicals are Democratic in terms of party registration. Only Lutheran respondents give a small registration edge to the Republicans. When they actually cast their ballots, evangelicals remain solidly Democratic, though by a narrower margin than party registration would lead one to expect. Pluralities of Lutheran and high-status denomination evangelicals say that they cast more votes for Republicans than Democrats, while Baptists and Catholics remain heavily Democratic. On the other hand, evangelicals say that they are conservative. While 61.8% of respondents choose the conservative label to describe their views, only 27.2% opt for the liberal label. Among subsamples, Catholics stand out far and away as the most liberal evangelical denomination, with 36.7% of Catholics calling themselves liberal. Baptists, who are the most Democratic denomination, prove to be strongly conservative, with liberals outnumbered by more than three-to-one.

It is fair to characterize evangelicals as conservative Democrats who are willing when the time is right to cast their votes for conservative Republicans. Ronald Reagan, for example, did well among all denominational subgroups in his 1980 contest against incumbent Jimmy Carter. Two years later, however, evangelicals returned to their normal voting pattern by opting for Democratic congressional candidates. In both elections, denominations which include higher status members—Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Lutherans, etc.—tended to produce a more Republican vote. Not surprisingly, Republican candidates did better with higher income and higher education evangelicals.

Evangelicals who are registered to vote prove to be politically active. Over one-third of respondents have contributed to a candidate or political party within the past two years, and more than one-fifth have volunteered time for a candidate or political cause. More than four out of five have voted in a primary election. Interestingly, almost two-thirds of evangelical respondents have never heard of the National Conservative Political Action Committee, and those who have an opinion of the organization give it mixed reviews. Moral Majority and the National Organization of Women were much better known, but sizable percentages of respondents have both positive and negative views of each organization. The organization which has the highest favorable-to-unfavorable ratio is the National Education Association, which suggests that conservatives critical of that group have not yet been successful in creating doubts in the mind of the general public about the goals of that organization.

Footnote

1. See John P. Katosh and Michael W. Traugott, "The Consequences of Validated and Self-Reported Voting Measures," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 45 (Winter, 1981): 519-535. Katosh and Traugott found a "substantial amount of misreporting of registration status and voting behavior . . . the net effect [of which] is to consistently overstate the levels of participation in a socially desirable direction—being registered and having voted." (p. 522) They go on to conclude that the result is "a bandwagon effect in support of the winner, tempered by the candidate's relative electoral performance." (p. 533) It also seems reasonable to assume that a survey taken after an elected official has taken office could also reflect that person's performance in office.

Chapter VII
The Importance of Religion

The purpose of this chapter is to combine much of the information that we have looked at in the previous chapters of this volume. In this chapter (and in Chapter VIII which follows), we will examine what the data tell us in a general sense about the relationship between religion and politics in this country. We will begin by examining whether religiosity and other religious variables have an independent impact on *political attitudes* above and beyond what we would predict from knowledge of individuals' demographic and geographic classifications. We will then look at what we can determine in an overall sense about individuals' partisan affiliation and voting behavior—and how these two political variables are related to religion and religious variables in a broad context.

In previous chapters we have looked in a very specific way at a variety of different relationships among these types of variables. Here we put the information we have discussed previously into context—to see if we can arrive at some overall conclusions about the relative weight that religion and religious variables may have in the political process in America today. The chapter which follows will look at two different mechanisms which may potentially be used by religious leaders and others in this country to mobilize or activate religious variables as part of the political process.

Political Attitudes

The analyses discussed in Chapters IV, V, and VI of this study showed clearly that the attitudes measured in this study *do* have basic relationships to demographic, geographic, and political variables, as well as in many instances to individual measures of religiosity and relative fundamentalism. Here we will attempt to put all of this information together to see what the *relative* weight of these religious variables are in determining political attitudes—controlling for other non-religious variables.

Table 7.1. Significance of Variables, by issue

Variables	Nuclear Weapons Freeze	Tuition Tax Credit	ERA	Voluntary School Prayer	U.S. Troops in El Salvador?	U.S. Increased Defense Spending?	Birth Control Info Public Schools?	AIDS is God's Punishment
Education	.71	.26	.22	.12	.07	.71	.79	*.0003*
Attend Rel. Services	.87	.89	.01	.92	.80	.95	.68	.21
Importance Religion	.65	*.0002*	*.002*	*.0001*	.98	.71	.03	*.0002*
Occupation	.69	.34	.85	.65	.13	.21	.35	.35
Income	.38	.06	.50	.98	.59	*.05*	.30	*.005*
Sex	.74	.29	.07	.58	.13	.75	*.03*	*.03*
Age	.26	.12	.70	.07	.52	.13	*.0001*	.30
Political & Ideology	*.0001*	.07	*.0001*	.08	.14	*.0001*	.09	.43
Race	.35	*.03*	*.0001*	*.01*	*.0016*	*.007*	.24	.28
Born-Again?	.85	.20	.89	.53	.02	.46	*.009*	.52
Biblical Literalist?	.69	.38	*.002*	.06	.37	.80	*.02*	*.01*
Fundamentalist?	.30	.30	.17	.96	.24	.30	.81	*.02*
Sword of the Lord ID?	.64	*.04*	.78	.19	.97	*.03*	.12	.09
Geographic Location	.66	.74	.12	.23	.22	*.04*	.34	.48
Denomination	*.03*	*.0002*	.51	*.0002*	.16	*.0002*	.60	*.0001*
R^2	9.5%	9.5%	18.3%	10.8%	9.6%	12.8%	17.0%	19.5%

Table 7.1 displays the results of a multivariate procedure which allows us to interpret the impact of specific variables in determining a political attitude, independent of the impact of other variables. That is, the procedure allows us to identify those variables which *by themselves* have an effect on an individual's political attitudes. The table reflects the results of a statistical test of significance. The test is an analysis of covariance procedure which measures the relationship between the fifteen independent variables listed in each column and the dependent variable at the top of the column. The coefficients listed are the significance levels for F-tests of the significance of each independent variable entered last into the equation. The significance levels test the significance of incremental variation explained by the independent variable after all other independent variables have been entered into the equation. Significance levels of .05 and greater have been underlined. The direction of the relationships between each significant independent variable and each dependent variable are not derivable from the significance coefficients. The significance levels simply tell us that there is an independent relationship between individuals' positions on the independent variable and their positions on the dependent variable.

The nature or direction of the relationship is evident when we look at the bivariate relationship among these variables as discussed in chapters IV, V, and VI previously. (In the discussions which follow, we will highlight the nature of the relationships as we discuss independent variables' relationships to political attitudes.)

What is striking when we examine this table is the lack of a strong pattern of relationship to attitudes of any *particular* religious or fundamentalism variable. *Some* measures of fundamentalism in religiosity are independently related to *some* attitudes, but not to others. No single religious variable is always related to all political attitudes we tested.

We will divide the attitudes here as we have done in Chapters IV and V. Five political attitudes are fairly directly related to religion because of their cultural or moral nature—tuition tax credits, ERA, voluntary school prayer, birth control information in public schools, and AIDS as God's punishment. The other three variables—nuclear weapons freeze, troops in El Salvador and increased defense spending—are not *directly* related to religious or moral values (though we do not doubt that the issues have a moral element and are perceived by some as moral questions).

Cultural/religious/moral attitudes. The *importance of religion* in a respondent's life predicts independently to that respondent's attitude on *each* of these five moral or religious variables. This one variable—*importance of religion in a person's life*—is in fact the only religious variable which has an independent impact on all five of these attitudes. Thus, we can say clearly that the more religious an individual is, as measured by his self-report, the stronger his position on each of these five political attitudes. Looked at differently, we conclude that individuals among whom religion is very or extremely important in their daily lives are:

- More likely to favor a tuition tax credit.
- Less likely to favor passage of the ERA.
- More likely to favor voluntary school prayer.
- Less likely to favor the availability of birth control information in the public schools.
- More likely to feel that AIDS is God's punishment of the homosexual community.

The "born-again" status of evangelicals in our sample has an independent effect on only one of these moral or religious political attitudes—the availability of birth control in the public schools. Born-again Christians are significantly more likely to oppose the availability of birth control information than others in the sample.

Those evangelicals who interpret the Bible literally differ from the average evangelical on three of these moral or religious variables:

- Biblical literalists are less likely to favor ERA than others.
- Biblical literalists are less likely to favor the availability of birth control in public schools.
- Biblical literalists are more likely to feel that AIDS was God's punishment of the homosexual community.

Self-identification as a fundamentalist is related to only one of the religious or moral variables—the feeling that AIDS is God's punishment for homosexuals. Those who self-identify themselves as fundamentalists are more likely to agree with the statement than others.

Evangelicals who indicate an awareness or knowledge of the *Sword of the Lord* publication are different than the average evangelical on only one of the religious or moral attitudes—tuition tax credits. Interestingly, those who are familiar with the *Sword of the Lord* are *less* likely than the average evangelical to favor a tuition tax credit. As noted earlier, this could indicate an aversion on the part of these individuals to government programs or educational intervention.

The denomination of the evangelical has an independent and significant relationship to three religious or moral political attitudes:

- *Tuition tax credits.* Catholics are strongly more likely to favor the tuition tax credit than are others.
- *Voluntary school prayer.* Those in high-status denominations are more likely to oppose voluntary school prayer than are others.
- *AIDS is God's punishment.* Those in conservative denominations and Baptists are most likely to agree that AIDS is God's punishment, while those in high-status denominations and Methodists are most likely to disagree.

Non-religious political attitudes. Our measures of religiosity and fundamentalism are less highly related to the three non-religious attitudes, as we can see from the table. The only religious variable connected to the nuclear freeze position is denomination. Catholics and Lutherans are significantly above average in support for the freeze while conservative denominations are less in favor. No other measures of religiosity or fundamentalism have an independent relationship to position on this attitude.

The only religious variable related to the individual's position on U.S. troops in El Salvador is whether or not he has been born again. Those Christians in our sample who identify themselves as having been born again are more in favor of sending troops to El Salvador than are evangelicals who are not born again.

Two religious variables are related to attitude toward U.S. defense spending. Those individuals who are aware of and can identify the *Sword of the Lord* publication are more in favor of increased defense spending than are others in the sample. Conservative denomination members are also most in favor of increasing defense spending while Lutherans, Catholics, and those in other denominations are most likely to be in favor of decreasing defense spending.

It is important that we note that self-reported importance of religion in the evangelical's daily life does *not* bear a relationship to any of these three non-religious variables. We contrast that with the fact that it bore a direct relationship to all five of the other variables.

We conclude from an analysis of these data that the religion and degree of religiosity of an evangelical in this country today *can have* a relationship to his or her attitudes on particular issues in the political marketplace. We note that—perhaps not surprisingly—religion is most strongly related to those political attitudes which bear some type of cultural connection to religion. Religion is significantly less likely to be related to attitudes which are not self-evidently moral or religious in nature.

Political candidates or political organizations who are attempting to mobilize or utilize religious groups in the political arena today will have their strongest and most effective results when they utilize these particularly religious issues. In other words, it will be more difficult to try to draw a connection between a person's strong religious feelings and more abstract foreign policy issues such as El Salvador or a nuclear weapons freeze. This is important because there has been some suggestion (particularly from some of the more liberal clergy) that religion *should* be related to these foreign policy issues. There have in fact been some explicit attempts to create a connection between advocating a nuclear weapons freeze and a person's religiosity. What these data show is that religion, to this point in time at any rate, is *not* directly related to these kinds of political attitudes.

There are also implications in these data concerning the utility of classifying Christians in this country into sub-groups of fundamentalists. These data indicate fairly strongly that the particular definitional criteria used by a researcher to define his fundamentalist sample *will make* a difference in the variance in attitudes he detects. The researcher who says that a fundamentalist is one who believes that the Bible is literally true, will miss some relationships between the broad concept of fundamentalism and attitudes that might be detected if that same researcher had used—for example—knowledge of the *Sword of the Lord* publication as his defining variable. Similarly, we see that using the born-again status of the respondent as a defining criterion for fundamentalism will mean that the researcher will find less of a relationship between his born-again Christians and political attitudes than he might if he utilized another criterion for fundamentalism.

In connection with this, we emphasize again that the self-reported importance of religion to the evangelical bears a strong relationship to each and every one of the specifically moral or religious attitudes measured in this study. In other words, this type of measure of *intensity* of religious commitment explains more variation in attitudinal positions than do any of the other religious attitudinal measures. It is apparent then that we need to know more than simply how a person views the literal nature of the Bible, or whether one thinks that he or she has had a born-again experience. We apparently must deal with a measure of *intensity* or *depth* of feeling. It is apparent that we can have two individuals who believe that the Bible is literally true, but to one this belief can be extremely important and a determining factor in his outlook on life (including politics), while for the other individual, this belief could be less strongly held and more irrelevant to his outlook on life. These methodological considerations are of considerable importance to scholars who are working in this area.

Partisan Identification

In Chapter VI, we reviewed carefully the evidence which documents the partisan identification of our evangelical sample. We found that the overall evangelical sample is somewhat more Democratic in partisan self-report than Republican. We also found there is little direct (or bivariate) relationship between our measures of depth of evangelical fervor or fundamentalism and partisan identification. That is, evangelicals who are more orthodox in their behavior or beliefs are not necessarily more Republican.

Partisan ID has long been seen as a political variable which is subject to what have been called "cross-pressures."[1] In its own way, partisan identification is similar to religious denomination or religious category. Both are self-reported, generalized variables for the individual and both are largely acquired through early socialization and through the forces at work in an individual's cultural milieu. Thus, studies have shown that religious denomination or type of religious identification is generally highly correlated with the denominational or religious identification of one's parents,[2] and studies have also shown that political party identification is also generally highly correlated with the political identification of one's parents.[3] Additionally, both denomination identification and partisan identification are significantly related to life-space characteristics (in a sociological sense) such as socioeconomic status, gender, race, and geography.

When we look then at the relationship between an individual's particular denomination, or type of religion, and his or her political party, we are more often than not looking at two variables which are both the result of the same factors. Party identification and denominational preference, in other words, both will vary with the socioeconomic and cultural background of the individual. Thus, in a multivariate sense, the controlling or independent causal variables responsible for party identification are also responsible for denominational preference. When we *control* for these background variables, it is not surprising that we do not find an independent relationship between denomination and party.

We have in this study, of course, looked at a variety of measures of religiosity above and beyond an individual's particular religion and/or denomination. These factors—including whether or not an individual is "born again," his feelings about a literal interpretation of the Bible, and so forth—*are* somewhat related to a person's denomination. We have found that individuals in Baptist and conservative denominations are more likely to be classified in these fundamentalist categories than are people who are in high-status denominations.

There is some independent variation *within* a denomination in terms of the number of individuals who meet these fundamentalist criteria and the number who do not. In other words, whether or not an individual can be classified as fundamentalist on these measures is the result of factors *above and beyond* his particular denomination. For this reason, studies which operationalize fundamentalism by employing denominational criteria are treading on dangerous ground.

As we have seen, however, the relationship between these fundamentalist variables and political party is not strong. In other words, these data seem to indicate that even within a given denomination, whether or not a person is more fundamentalist or less fundamentalist does *not* predict well whether or not he is a Democrat or a Republican. The only exception, as we saw in the previous chapter, concerns the publication *Sword of the Lord*, knowledge of which has somewhat of an independent impact on the likelihood that a person is a Democrat.

In summary, there is no evidence in these data to indicate that an increase in the trend for more and more individuals in this country to consider themselves evangelicals, born-agains, or fundamentalists (or even an increasing politicalization of these groups) will substantially affect the partisan structure of this country.

It is our conclusion that partisan identification is such a stable, sociologically determined global and cultural variable for an individual that his or her relative *variation on measurements of religiosity does not have much of an independent effect on it.* In other words, whether or not a person has moved to a deeper commitment to religion, has had a born-again experience, has come to the point where he or she interprets the Bible literally, and so forth, are not strong enough factors to force them to alter the general partisan identification they have "historically" claimed for themselves. The *partisan identification* of an evangelical is most determined by the *social background and current social standing* of that individual (in a sociological sense). We do *not* find much evidence that evangelicals in this country shift or jump around in their partisan identification based on having had different religious experiences.

This may not be surprising, given underlying assumptions by those who study the political system in this country that there are not huge shifts in partisan identification across time. Gallup Poll cumulative data across time, for example, demonstrate few huge shifts in party identification. About 45% of the American population called themselves Democrats in 1950, about 46% called themselves Democrats in 1968, about 45% called themselves Democrats in 1979, and about 44% called themselves Democrats in 1983.[4] The data show a slight decrease in those who call themselves Republicans from the 1940's and early 1950's to the present time, but when we look over the last ten years, we find that 20-25% of Americans have consistently called themselves Republicans. These data reinforce the conclusion that partisan identification is a variable in the population which does not undergo massive changes or shifts.

Voting Behavior

The *voting behavior* of individuals in this country is an entirely different matter, of course. While there has been remarkable stability of partisan identification over time, there is abundant evidence that electoral support for partisan candidates can in fact change radically across remarkably small amounts of time. The voting behavior of an individual is much more susceptible to various attitudinal or short-term influences than is partisan identification. It is quite obvious, of course, that the election of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan in the last twenty years of American politics was due to the fact that a substantial number of individual voters in this country who were not Republicans voted for these Republican presidential candidates. We find the same party shifts in all manner of elections across the country, although in general the more "down-ticket" the race, the more important partisan identification is in predicting the vote. In a general sense, we would expect to be able to say that the religiosity or relative fundamentalism of a given voter in this country *could* potentially have more influence on how he is going to vote in a given election than on his overall partisan identification.

We can see what the data say about this topic in two different ways. The first we call a *direct approach*. Using this method, we simply ask evangelicals whether or not in their own mind religion plays an important part in their decision in voting. We asked evangelicals in this study about their vote for President in 1980, about their vote in U.S. Congressional races in 1982, and in their upcoming vote in the 1984 Presidential elections.

The second approach is an *indirect approach*. Using this method, we will see if we can determine through a careful analysis of data the relationships between individuals' relative fundamentalism or religiosity and how they voted.

Direct Approach. We briefly reviewed in the previous chapter what evangelicals in our sample told us about the importance of religion in their voting decision.

Our conclusion: the data show that religion was not as strongly related to the vote as we might predict. In fact, we noted that even the most fundamentalist and religious individuals (based on our definitions) still did not report that religion was extremely important in their voting decision. In no identifiable subgroup in this study can we find a majority of voters who say that religion was either extremely or very important in their decision on voting in the presidential elections of 1980 or the U.S. Congressional elections in 1982. Phrased differently, at least one-half of every identifiable fundamentalist group in this country say that religion was either unimportant or just somewhat important in their decision in voting .

What about the upcoming election for President? When we ask evangelicals about the 1984 election we find the following:

Table 7.2. 1984 Importance of Religion—Presidential Election

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Unimportant
All evangelicals	11%	19%	28%	39%
White evangelicals	10	18	28	40
Black evangelicals	15	27	21	32

These data show a somewhat heightened tendency for voters to say religion is going to be important to them in 1984—compared to what they told us about the 1980 and 1982 elections. About 30% of all our evangelicals say that religion will be either extremely or very important in their 1984 decisions, compared to the 24% who reported it as being extremely or very important in 1980 or the 18% who said it was extremely or very important in 1982. Comparing the 1980 election to the evangelicals' projections about the 1984 election, we see a six percentage point increase in self-reported religious impact on that election. (As we found in the other two measurements, white evangelicals are slightly less likely to say religion is extremely or very important, whereas black evangelicals are slightly more likely to.)

Similar to what we found looking *back* in time, we find that the more fundamentalist and religious groups within our sample are the most likely to say that they are going to take religion into account in the 1984 election.

Table 7.3. Importance of Religion, 1984

	Percent saying that religion will be extremely or very important in their vote in the 1984 presidential election
Sample Average	30%
Born-again Christian	39
Those who attend religious services several times a week	51
Those among whom religion is extremely important in their daily life	50
Those who think that the Bible is literally true	37
Those self-reported fundamentalists	40
Those who have heard of the *Sword of the Lord*	39

The groups of evangelicals who are most likely to take religion into account are those who are the most religious: those who attend religious services the most and those who say religion is extremely important to them. Of our fundamentalist groups within our overall evangelical sample, we find less than 50% saying that religion will be extremely or very important to them in the forthcoming Presidential election. In other words, all groups of more religious and fundamentalist respondents, as we have defined them in this study, still have over 50% of its membership saying that religion will just be somewhat or not at all important in their vote for President in the coming election.

What do these data tell us? Our interpretation is somewhat akin to the individual who ponders a glass which is partially filled with water, and asks himself whether the glass is half empty or half full. The impact of these data may depend on one's starting point or comparative reference. They do seem to reaffirm to us, however, the conclusions we reached on looking at the retrospective data. Some evangelicals believe that religion will be an important aspect of their voting decision, but a majority of evangelicals do not.

There are pitfalls in interpreting self-reported data. "Taking religion into account" may mean one thing to one evangelical and something else to another. In particular, as we will develop in the discussion which follows, it is apparent that one major way that religion is going to have an impact on the election (and could have an impact on any election) is through candidate "activation" of particularly sensitive issues which may be only indirectly related to religion. Thus, an evangelical who is motivated to vote—for example—for President Reagan because of his strong position on voluntary school prayer, may still not see that as a vote based on religion, when in fact it is by our criteria. Nevertheless, these self-reported direct data are important in a variety of different ways. In particular they tell us that a candidate who attempts to appeal directly to evangelicals and fundamentalists based on religion is not going to have extraordinary success. In other words, the candidate who says "vote for me because of the following three religious factors which relate to your fundamentalism," is going to be preaching to a group of people at least half of whom say that they do not want to take his religion into account.

Indirect Approach. How can we analyze indirectly the relationship of religion to a person's vote for a particular candidate? We know, of course, that religion has been involved in elections in one fashion or the other in this country almost since 1776. There was significant concern over the Catholicism of John F. Kennedy, forcing him to make a pilgrimage to Houston to talk with Southern Baptist leaders in order to assuage their fears that there would be a "direct line to the Vatican from the White House" if he were elected. Religion reared its head again in the 1980 Presidential election with Jimmy Carter, who was very open about his "born-again" status as a Southern Baptist. Below the Congressional level, there have been a wide variety of circumstances in which the religion or religious views of candidates for Senate, U.S. Congress and other offices have been a factor in the race (see Chapter I).

What is of particular interest to us here is the impact of the group of Christians we call evangelicals and fundamentalists in this country's elections. We have seen to this point that individuals whom we can classify as members of these groups in fact *do* have different attitudes on certain politically related issues than do other Christians. We have also seen that people we can identify as being members of a fundamentalist *core* of Christians in this country generally do *not* have different partisan identifications than we would predict for these individuals based on our knowledge of demographic and geographic factors. We have also seen that these individuals on average state that religion is not going to be the most important thing they take into account when they make a decision on voting in the Presidential race.

To summarize, we have indications that members of certain evangelical groups in this country have strong positions on certain attitudinal issues—particularly those issues that are more directly related to moral or religious cultural values. We do *not* have evidence on the other hand that members of these groups have changed their party (and moved to a more conservative Republican orientation). Finally, we see that these people do not seem to think that they are going to take religion into account to any *great* extent in the coming election (and they claim they did not take it into account in previous elections).

Our conclusion is that the probable way that the conservative, fundamentalist religious values of individuals in this country *could have* an impact on the electoral process would be for a particular candidate in a given race to *activate* or touch heavily on religiously-related issues which are particularly germane to the evangelical or fundamentalist voter. The Republican Party *per se* apparently has *not* benefited greatly at this point in time from any defection of fundamentalist Democrats to Republican ranks, and probably will not create a great impact by simply stressing that evangelicals or fundamentalists in this country should be Republicans. Instead, it would appear that the greatest success which can be achieved by certain conservative candidates would be to activate fundamentalists or evangelicals *on selected issues*. (We will consider in the following chapter two specific mechanisms or channels by which this mobilization process may be achieved.)

It seems important to stress here that registration to vote by evangelicals or fundamentalists does not in and of itself mean that Republican or conservative candidates are gaining actual votes in an election. Registering large members of evangelical or fundamentalist Christians to vote in this country today implies the registration of a group of people who generally—according to our data—are more likely to consider themselves Democrats than Republicans. Thus, while the registration process may be considered a necessary first step in activating this new group of voters, in and of itself it will not be sufficient. The registration *must* be followed by specific attempts to *link* these evangelical and fundamental Christians to vote for given candidates based on *issue salience*.

This is in sharp contrast to efforts aimed at registering blacks in this country. Our data, and most other data, show that when ten blacks are registered to vote, at least nine of those blacks will consider themselves Democrats and will in fact vote for a Democratic candidate in an election. On the other hand, our data show that if ten fundamentalist or evangelical Christians are registered to vote in this country, more than half will consider themselves Democrats and less than half will consider themselves Republicans. Given the fact that these individuals tell us that religion is not the major thing they are going to take into account in an election, we have a situation in which massive registration efforts aimed at fundamentalist or evangelical Christians may be producing more Democratically-oriented votes than Republican-oriented votes *if nothing else is done*.

In a nationwide study such as this one, we are not able to measure individual reactions to specific U.S. Senate, U.S. House, or other localized races. However, we did ask our sample about three elections—the 1980 Presidential election between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, a generic ballot on the 1982 U.S. Congressional races, and a projected sensitivity to voting in the 1984 Presidential race. We have considered the basic responses to these ballot questions in Chapter VI.

We recall one finding which is particularly important to our present discussion: while our total evangelical sample reported voting for Reagan over Carter by an eleven percentage point margin, the sample reported voting for Democratic, rather than Republican, Congressional candidates in 1982 by a three percentage point margin. These data indicate clearly that in Congressional races individuals are much more likely to resort to their partisan orientations, while in Presidential races they can be swayed off of their partisan starting point by the idiosyncratic characteristics of the candidates. These data also suggest that a candidate does have the potential for moving voters away from partisan identification, but that (1) it will probably be more difficult in non-Presidential down-ticket races (since they lack visibility), and (2) it will be hard work, since that candidate will be fighting against the underlying partisan predisposition.

Our analysis of the voting trends in the 1980 and 1982 self-reported vote do *not* show strong differences by our various measures of religiosity and fundamentalism. We do find that there is a tendency for those who hold the Bible to be literally true to be more Democratic in their vote (both in 1980 and 1982) than others, but we ascribe this to their strongly downscale educational status.

In our projected 1984 ballot tests of Reagan against Walter Mondale and John Glenn—as discussed in the previous chapter—we find that Reagan may have a slightly higher level of support among white evangelicals than in the public at large. We noted additionally that the only religious or fundamentalism variable which has any kind of relationship to the vote was self-reported fundamentalism, and even among these fundamentalists the increase in support for Reagan was only marginal.

To look at these data in a somewhat different light, we will examine the Reagan versus Mondale ballot using an analysis of covariance procedure. The model we are using includes as independent variables: (1) the attitudinal measures we have tested in this study, (2) the religiosity and fundamentalism measures we have tested, and (3) demographic variables. (We note that this procedure involves the assumption that the three-value variable on the Reagan-Mondale ballot can be considered to have an interval level nature—that is, it moves from lesser to greater support as we move from Reagan to "unsure" to Mondale.)

These results (see Table 7.4) lead to the following conclusions:

- Attitudes are the best predictor of the Reagan and Mondale vote. We see that attitude towards increased defense spending is the single most powerful predictor towards an individual's projected vote for Reagan or Mondale. If we had only one question to ask an individual voter in this country (other than his or her political party) we would do the best job of predicting his or her vote in the Presidential election by asking whether or not he or she favored increased defense spending. In other words, independent of socioeconomic status and other attitudes, this defense issue is the best predictor as to where an individual stands on the vote for either Reagan or Mondale.
- Other important *attitudinal* predictors to the vote for Reagan or Mondale include position on ERA, position on tuition tax credit, and position on the nuclear freeze. Each of these four attitudes (including defense spending), has an *independent* impact on a person's likelihood of voting for Reagan or Mondale. Those in favor of increased defense spending are disproportionately likely to vote for Reagan, those who favor the passage of the ERA are disproportionately likely to vote for Mondale, those who favor tuition tax credits are disproportionately likely to vote for Reagan and those who favor a nuclear freeze are disproportionately likely to vote for Mondale. We do not see an independent impact of position on voluntary school prayer, but a large percentage of our sample favors school prayer, and that reduces variation and thus the potential predictive power of this variable.

- It is not surprising to find that race, education, sex, and occupation all have independent impacts on likelihood of voting for Reagan or Mondale. The nature of these relationships have been well discussed: blacks and non-whites are disproportionately likely to vote for Mondale, those with lower levels of education and lower status occupations are disproportionately likely to vote for Mondale, and females—particularly employed females—are disproportionately likely to vote for Mondale.
- The only religious or fundamentalism variable which has any type of independent impact on vote for Reagan or Mondale is knowledge of the *Sword and the Lord* publication.

Table 7.4. Analysis of Covariance
Reagan-Mondale Ballot

Independent Variables	**F-test for Significance**
Education	*.0003*
Attend Religious Services	.0990
Importance of Religion in Daily Life	.5401
Occupation	*.0062*
Income	.9348
Sex	*.0006*
Age	.5427
Race	*.0001*
Born-Again?	.8704
Biblical Literalist?	.7298
Sword of the Lord I.D.?	*.0314*
Region of Country	.3961
Denomination	.4319
Attitude re: Nuclear Freeze	*.0226*
Attitude re: Tuition Tax Credits	*.0093*
Attitude re: ERA	*.0001*
Attitude re: Public School Prayer	.5229
Attitude re: Central America/troops	.6916
Attitude re: Defense Spending	*.0001*
Attitude re: Birth Control Information	.1787
Attitude re: Abortion for Any Reason	.4802
Attitude re: Aid for Abortions	.6772
Basis for Abortion Views	.6572
Attitude re: AIDS	.3683
	$R^2 = .31$

What we see here in this very preliminary test of what is going to *drive the ballot* in the 1984 Presidential election, is the salience of particular attitudinal issues. The important relationship between issue position and vote for Reagan-Mondale overwhelm or swamp any independent impact that religious or fundamentalism variables might have. In other words, this analysis supports our contention that there is no necessary or direct relationship between a voter's

Table 7.5. Religious Groups' Attitudes, in percentages

Religious Group	Nuclear Freeze Percent Pro/Con	Increased Defense Spending Percent Pro/Con	Central America Percent Oppose Any Military Assistance	Prayer in School Percent Favor Strongly/ Total Opposed	Tuition Tax Credits Percent Pro/Con	ERA Percent Pro/Con	Birth Control Inform. Percent Pro/Con	AIDS Is God's Punishment Percent Agree/ Disagree	Abortion Percent Outlaw/ Always Legal	Ideology Percent Conserv./ Mod./ Liberal	Usual Vote Percent R, D, Ticket-Splitter	Party Regist. Percent R/D/I	N =
Fundamentalists	43-43	45-28	20	79- 5	56-32	49-35	70-26	44-47	26-33	76- 5-19	37-44-10	36-49-12	197
Born-Agains	40-38	41-32	23	80- 5	50-57	53-28	63-30	36-47	31-24	66-11-23	33-47-20	34-53-11	578
Attend church "several times each week"	36-36	44-26	19	83- 2	53-32	44-39	54-38	44-31	45-12	68-15-17	29-52-20	29-56-13	196
Religion "extremely important"	41-39	39-32	25	84- 4	57-31	49-33	58-33	39-42	37-18	68-11-22	31-48-22	34-55-10	403
Biblical literalists	42-35	40-32	23	81- 5	54-34	55-27	62-30	39-43	33-24	61-15-23	28-50-22	32-57- 9	405
Protestants	39-39	42-28	24	78- 5	50-40	53-27	69-25	34-51	26-24	64-12-23	34-46-20	34-52-12	669
Baptists	38-39	44-32	20	83- 2	49-35	55-26	69-26	37-45	28-27	66-14-21	26-58-17	26-64-8	274
High-Status Denom.	40-43	45-22	29	65-12	48-48	55-29	75-18	17-72	22-45	69-11-20	42-38-20	39-48-14	65
Conserv. Denom.	31-46	48-20	23	86- 3	43-44	47-31	64-31	45-33	31-21	65-15-20	35-40-25	37-47-12	137
Methodists	42-35	44-28	28	73- 4	48-42	53-28	68-24	18-68	16-36	59-11-30	35-45-20	36-51-13	120
Lutherans	51-38	29-46	28	66-18	54-42	57-28	62-29	26-63	25-25	71- 3-26	45-40-15	40-37-22	65
Catholics	54-34	31-43	31	72- 7	64-31	59-24	68-23	22-67	32-26	57- 7-36	30-49-20	33-54-10	230
All Evangelicals	43-38	39-33	25	77- 6	53-37	56-26	68-25	30-53	27-29	62-11-27	32-47-20	33-53-14	1000

fundamentalism or religiosity and his or her vote for a particular candidate. The connection *must be made by the candidate* himself by virtue of the candidate's *positioning* of him or herself *on selected issues*.[5]

Footnotes

1. Walter DeVries and Lance Tarrance, Jr., *The Ticket-Splitter: A New Force in American Politics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972).
2. Frank Newport, "The Religious Switcher in the United States," *American Sociological Review* 44 (August, 1979): 528-552.
3. See M. Kent Jennings and Richard Neimi, "The Transmission of Political Values from Parent to Child," *American Political Science Review* 62 (March, 1968): 169-184.
4. The Gallup Poll, released August 12, 1984.
5. We have noted here, of course, that the only issue that is directly related to religion is tuition tax credits (given that we have no variation on voluntary school prayer). These data would suggest that conservatives could activate or create additional electoral support by pursuing an active public role of advocating tuition tax credits in this country.

Chapter VIII
Ministers and Media

Religion and religious attitudes and behavior constitute one of the most complex elements of human behavior to study and understand. In the context of this study, we have been looking at religion primarily as an independent or causal variable. We have looked at the relationship between various indicators of religiosity and a wide variety of other political attitudes and behaviors. Our assumption has been that the American political system—in particular voting behavior—is affected to some unknown degree by the underlying religious convictions and attitudes of the country's voting age population. Thus, the rationale for this study has been that politics in America can be better understood if we carefully analyze objective data about the relationship between religion and politics.

In this chapter, we will attempt to identify any possible *independent* impact that religion may have on the American political system, above and beyond the correlational evidence we have discovered so far. Additionally, we will look at religion's potential as a "potent" political variable by examining several different mechanisms or structural opportunities for *mobilizing* voters with certain religious convictions and thus making religion in the future more of an influential or causal variable in the political process.

What is the potential for religion to have more of an impact on the political process in the years to come? Part of the answer to this question lies with events which may or may not transpire. Certain individuals who run for office, certain pieces of legislation, and certain historical circumstances can all work in a broad sense to "activate" people of certain religious views to vote or to vote *in certain ways* in political races.

Much recent sociological thought on social movements in this country (and throughout the world) points to a theoretical position that individuals are mobilized into political action through specific mechanisms—most usually existing social structures.[1] This view would tend to see predisposing attitudes and opinions as being an underlying necessary potential basis for political action, but not necessarily a *sufficient* basis for that action. *In other words, individuals and groups of individuals with certain attitudes and opinions must be activated or mobilized to act upon them.* Connections between their attitudes and opinions and political actions must be pointed out, and structural mechanisms must be in place for encouraging and synthesizing these individuals to act. The key thrust of this type of resource mobilization argument is that human beings are born, live and die through a series of groups, and that it is these groups which have the most potent effect on human behavior. Political action and social movements thus are a result of the activation of certain structures in society rather than more random individualistic actions.

The meaning of this resource mobilization approach for the present work is clear. Although we have demonstrated the existence of relationships between underlying religious attitudes and behaviors and political attitudes and behaviors, it can be argued that it will be necessary to mobilize religious individuals if religious views are going to have an actual, demonstrable impact on politics in this country. In this context, we will consider here two such social structural mechanisms for mobilization: the local church (and other denominational and religious groupings), and television.

The Influence of the Local Church

The impact of the local church in the black community on political actions is now accepted as a "given" and potent fact of life for the black vote in America today. For many years up to and including the activities of Rev. Jesse Jackson in the 1984 election cycle, black political leaders and candidates have utilized the structure of the local black church as a mechanism for mobilizing and reaching the black voter. One most obvious explanation for this pattern is the fact that the black church has been one of the few widely spread structural or organizational units which affect most black families in this country. The church in other words provides an efficient mechanism for reaching black voters. A second explanation for this phenomenon centers on the "legitimation" which is tied to religious leaders in any setting. One of the key functions of religion in human life is to legitimate or authenticate certain positions or philosophies or rationales for action in one's life. Thus, the impact of the local religious leader (the pastor) in a black community is great, and the black pastor has assumed an important role in the black community.

In this study we will examine the potential impact of the church on black political views by isolating black evangelicals in our sample. We will, additionally, in the pages which follow, look carefully at what these data tell us about the impact, and potential impact, of the local church on white evangelicals. As these data have clearly shown, evangelical and fundamentalist voters in this country are widely dispersed, geographically and socioeconomically. If local churches can be utilized to activate these individuals to vote in particular ways, the impact can be tremendous, since there are generally few other social structures or organizations which are readily available to reach these individuals in an efficient way.

We can approach this topic by examining responses to several different survey questions. Evangelical respondents were asked a series of questions about how often their minister in the local church makes political pronouncements, political recommendations, or any commentary on political matters—and in what context these are made. Additionally, evangelicals were queried as to their self-reported reaction to such influence through the local church, including in particular a question on whether or not a pastoral recommendation to vote one way or the other would have any impact.

Since black evangelicals have a different history and tradition of the local church than whites, we will separate black evangelicals from white evangelicals and compare and contrast the two groups.

We look first at a basic question concerning religion and politics (see Table 8.1). There is no overwhelmingly strong objection on the part of white respondents *or* black respondents to religious leaders getting involved in politics. A little more than half of white evangelicals in our sample feel that religious leaders and groups should take a very active role in politics, while two-thirds of black respondents feel this way. A little more than one-third of our white respondents, on the other hand, feel that religious leaders and groups should not be involved in politics (and 27% of black respondents feel this way).

Table 8.1. Religious Leaders and Political Involvement

"Some people feel that religious leaders and groups should confine their activities, and that they should not get involved in politics. Others feel that religious leaders and groups should take a very active role in politics. Which of these comes closer to your own opinion?"

All Respondents	**No Involvement** **35.7%**	**Active Role** **54.1%**	**Unsure** **10.2%**	**n =** **1000**
Born-Again?				
Yes	28.4	60.4	11.3	578
No	45.7	45.5	8.8	422
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Several Times/Week	23.5	66.8	9.7	196
Once per Week	37.1	54.3	8.6	440
Nearly every Week	35.5	54.2	10.2	166
Once per Month	40.3	47.2	12.5	72
Seldom/Never	47.6	37.3	15.1	126
Importance of Religion				
Extremely	25.1	65.0	9.9	403
Very	38.9	49.8	11.4	396
Somewhat	50.8	40.8	8.5	201

	No Involvement	Active Role	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**35.7%**	**54.1%**	**10.2%**	**1000**
Creation Story in Bible				
Literally True	32.8	58.3	8.9	405
True Account	32.2	57.0	10.8	370
Man's Feelings	44.4	46.1	9.4	180
Don't Know	55.6	24.4	20.0	45
Fundamentalist?				
Yes	28.9	65.5	5.6	197
No	38.1	51.2	10.8	649
Unsure	34.4	52.0	13.6	154
Sword of the Lord I.D.?				
Heard of	35.8	57.2	6.9	173
Never Heard of	35.7	53.5	10.9	827
Denomination				
Baptist	28.8	60.6	10.6	274
Methodist	38.3	50.8	10.8	120
Lutheran	44.6	50.8	4.6	65
High-Status Denom.	33.9	53.9	12.3	65
Conserv. Demon.	27.7	59.1	13.1	137
Catholic	43.6	48.2	8.3	218
Other Denom.	37.9	56.9	5.2	58
None Specified	41.3	42.9	15.9	63
Race				
Black	26.8	67.0	6.2	97
White	36.2	53.3	10.6	871
Other	50.0	37.5	12.5	32
Education				
No High School Degree	34.2	50.9	14.9	161
High School Grad	34.9	54.9	10.3	330
Some College	37.3	55.5	7.2	292
College Grad	35.2	53.1	11.7	145
Grad School	37.5	54.2	8.3	72
Age				
18-24	35.3	57.8	6.9	116
25-34	32.9	57.7	9.5	222
35-44	33.2	58.3	8.6	187
45-54	35.5	52.5	12.1	141
55-64	38.5	48.1	13.5	156
65+	39.3	50.6	10.1	168
No Answer	50.0	30.0	20.0	10
Total Family Income				
Under $10,000	37.7	51.8	10.6	85
$10,000-$19,999	32.8	57.4	9.8	244
$20,000-$29,999	37.2	53.4	9.5	253
$30,000-$39,999	34.5	58.6	6.9	174
$40,000+	46.1	43.5	10.4	154
Refused	22.2	58.9	18.9	90

	No Involvement	**Active Role**	**Unsure**	**n =**
All Respondents	**35.7%**	**54.1%**	**10.2%**	**1000**
Gender				
Male	37.8	51.9	10.3	399
Female/At Home	33.6	56.5	10.0	310
Female/Employed	35.1	54.7	10.3	291
Occupation				
Upper White-Collar	41.1	49.6	9.4	246
Lower White-Collar	36.1	59.3	4.6	108
Upper Blue-Collar	33.0	59.4	7.6	224
Lower Blue-Collar	29.1	55.6	15.4	117
Retired	36.5	50.7	12.8	211
Not in Labor Force	34.0	53.2	12.8	94
By Region				
New England/Mid-Atlantic	46.9	46.2	6.9	130
East/North Central	33.2	53.3	13.6	214
West/North Central	41.9	51.6	6.5	62
South Atlantic	30.7	59.5	9.8	205
East/South Central	27.3	63.6	9.1	88
West/South Central	34.9	54.0	11.2	152
Mountain/Pacific	39.6	50.3	10.1	149
Religion				
Protestant	34.5	54.4	11.1	669
Catholic	42.2	48.7	9.1	230
Other	28.7	64.4	6.9	101

Position on this issue is significantly related to measures of religiosity and fundamentalism. Sixty percent of born-again Christians are in favor of an active role (compared to 46% of non-born-agains). Sixty-seven percent of all evangelicals in our sample who attend religious services several times a week are in favor of an active role, as opposed to 37% of those who never attend. Sixty-five percent of those for whom religion is extremely important in their daily lives and 65% of self-defined fundamentalists are in favor of religious leaders and groups taking an active political role. However, there is not a strong relationship between belief in a literal Bible and knowledge of *Sword and the Lord* and this position.

How widespread is the influence of pastors' or ministers' *direct* involvement in politics? We first and foremost note that black ministers or pastors are significantly more likely to be involved than white—which, as we have noted previously, supports the "conventional wisdom." While only 27% of white respondents indicate that their minister or pastor has ever even talked about politics or given his opinions about government, fully 45% of black respondents say that their ministers have had this type of involvement.

Table 8.2. Ministers and Politics

"Does your minister or pastor ever talk about politics and give his opinions about what our government should or should not be doing?"

	Yes	**No**	**n =**
All Respondents	**28.6%**	**71.4%**	**1000**
Born-Again?			
Yes	30.5	69.6	578
No	26.1	73.9	422
Frequency of Church Attendance			
Several Times/Week	31.1	68.9	196
Once per Week	27.3	72.7	440
Nearly every Week	38.0	62.1	166
Once per Month	22.2	77.8	72
Seldom/Never	20.6	79.4	126
Importance of Religion			
Extremely	28.3	71.7	403
Very	30.8	69.2	396
Somewhat	24.9	75.1	201
Creation Story in Bible			
Literally True	22.0	78.0	405
True Account	30.3	69.7	370
Man's Feelings	38.9	61.1	180
Don't Know	33.3	66.7	45
Fundamentalist?			
Yes	32.0	68.0	197
No	27.3	72.7	649
Unsure	29.9	70.1	154
Sword of the Lord I.D.?			
Heard of	31.8	68.2	173
Never Heard of	27.9	72.1	827
Denomination			
Baptist	34.7	65.3	274
Methodist	27.5	72.5	120
Lutheran	15.4	84.6	65
High-Status Denom.	30.8	69.2	65
Conservative Denom.	27.0	73.0	137
Catholic	27.5	72.5	218
Other Denom.	22.4	77.6	58
None Specified	28.6	71.4	63
Race			
Black	45.4	54.6	97
White	26.9	73.1	871
Other	25.0	75.0	32
Education			
No High School Degree	20.5	79.5	161
High School Grad	25.5	74.6	330

All Respondents	**Yes** **28.6%**	**No** **71.4%**	**n =** **1000**
Some College	31.9	68.2	292
College Grad	34.5	65.5	145
Grad School	36.1	63.9	72
Age			
18-24	37.9	62.1	116
25-34	34.7	65.3	222
35-44	28.9	71.1	187
45-54	30.5	69.5	141
55-64	19.9	80.1	156
65+	20.2	79.8	168
No Answer	30.0	70.0	10
By Region			
New England/Mid-Atlantic	24.6	75.4	130
East/North Central	25.7	74.3	214
West/North Central	30.7	69.4	62
South Atlantic	30.7	69.3	205
East/South Central	42.1	58.0	88
West/South Central	27.6	72.4	152
Mountain/Pacific	25.5	74.5	149
Religion			
Protestant	28.9	71.2	669
Catholic	27.4	72.6	230
Other	29.7	70.3	101

The younger the evangelical is, and the better educated he is, the more likely he is to report that his minister gives his political views. (These relationships are among white respondents only. Given the relatively small number of blacks in the sample, it is difficult to examine black subgroups meaningfully.) For example, 20% of respondents with less than a high school education report their minister is involved politically, compared to 35% of those with graduate educations. Similarly, 35% of young evangelicals (18-25 years of age) report this type of involvement, compared to only 19% of those who are 55 years of age or older. Age and education relationships generally cut across denominations. The only major differentiations we find among denominations on this measure are Lutherans—among whom only 16% report their ministers are involved politically. As we would predict given the relationships among age, education, and belief in a literal Bible, Biblical literalists are significantly *less* likely than non-Biblical literalists to say that their minister gives his political views in the church service. There are on the other hand, *not* major differences by our self-reported measure of fundamentalism, by our *Sword of the Lord* identification, by the self-reported importance of religion in daily life, or by the born-again status of the respondents. In short, the best predictor of whether or not an evangelical's minister gives his political views is the age and education of the respondent—

and these relationships apparently reflect the *nature of the churches or congregations* that these young, better educated evangelicals associate with *rather than any other kinds of religious or fundamentalism measures.*

What is important for us to note here is that we do not find that the local church is being used differentially by fundamentalists (as compared to evangelicals) for political purposes. *There is no evidence in these data, in short, to support the notion that very fundamentalist and religious evangelicals (based on our measures) are approached by their ministers or are politically harangued by their minister to any greater extent than are other evangelicals.*

To delve into these data in some more detail, we asked all respondents who said that their minister ever talked about politics or gave his opinions about government to indicate the forum in which that was done, and to respond to two more specific types of questions about the nature of this political involvement. Among whites, we find that the forum in which the minister talks about politics is fairly evenly distributed—with about one-third of the whites who say their minister talks about politics saying he does so during his sermons, about one-third saying he does it at other times at church, and about one-third saying he does it outside of church. Among black respondents, however, there are sharper distinctions. In particular, we see that blacks report their ministers are most active politically at church, but not during sermons. This, of course, could reflect a behavioral pattern in black congregations, with meetings and discussions about political matters held in church outside of the worship hour.

Table 8.3. Reports of Ministers' Involvement in Political Matters

Minister:	Whites (n = 871)	Blacks (n = 97)	Total Sample (n = 1000)
Talks about politics during sermon	15%	22%	15%
Talks about politics at other times at church	14	35	16
Talks about politics outside church	16	23	17
Gives opinions about moral or religious character of politicians	10	18	11
Recommends vote for particular candidate	2	14	3

About one-third (37%) of whites who say their minister talks about politics say that he explicitly gives his opinion about the moral or religious character of politicians or political candidates. About the same percentage of blacks (41%) give an affirmative response to this question. Thus, overall, we have a situation in which about 10% of *all* white evangelicals report that their minister gives his opinion about the moral or religious character of politicians (37% of 27%), and in which about 18% of blacks respond affirmatively to this question.

Among white evangelicals, we find a tendency for fundamentalists to be the most likely to report that their minister gives his opinions about the moral or religious character of politicians. These differences are not large, but they are present. For example, 47% of self-defined fundamentalists, 43% of Biblical literalists, 43% of those for whom religion is extremely important, 54% of those who attend church several times a week, and 41% of those who report being born-again Christians say their minister gives his opinions about politics. For comparison purposes, we note again that 37% of *all* evangelicals in this subsample say that their minister gives his opinion about candidates for office.

Thus, although religiosity and fundamentalism are not related to the general tendency of ministers to talk about politics in a more general sense, they are somewhat related to his giving very specific recommendations about politicians or political candidates.

We asked all respondents who had given a "yes" answer to the general question about their minister's involvement in politics, if he had ever recommended that the evangelical *vote* for particular candidates. *Very few white evangelicals give an affirmative response to this question*—6% of the 27% who said that their ministers were ever involved in politics (for an overall percent of only 1.6% of all evangelicals). On the other hand, fully 30% of black evangelicals who met the original religious involvement screen say that their ministers recommend candidates—14% of all black evangelicals in the sample.

In summary, we see very little evidence that a large number of white evangelicals in this country have ministers or pastors who use the church as a forum for direct political involvement. Virtually no evangelicals in our sample report that their minister explicitly recommends that they vote for candidates, while only 10.7% say that he even talks about the moral or religious character of politicians. We find that younger, more upscale evangelicals are most likely to say that their minister talks in general about politics or government in his sermons, while there is some tendency for the more fundamentalist evangelicals to say that their ministers get more directly involved in discussing the moral or religious character of politicians. These latter relationships are not strong, however. *We have not found strong evidence to support a hypothesis that among white evangelicals and fundamentalists in this country the local church is being used as a forum or structural network for mobilizing support for political positions or political candidates.*

Table 8.4. Importance of Minister's Political Endorsement, by race

	White	Black
1. I would definitely vote for the candidate, regardless of anything else involved.	2%	5%
2. I would vote for the candidate if it didn't conflict with my own political views.	7%	14%
3. I would take my pastor's recommendation into account but I wouldn't necessarily vote for the candidate.	45%	35%
4. It would make no difference in how I voted.	45%	42%
5. Don't know/no answer	1%	3%

These data refer to past and current behavior patterns. There is always the possibility of an increasing tendency for the church to be utilized for political purposes in the years ahead. One measure of the *potential* effectiveness of this type of strategy is to ask evangelicals directly how they would react to such efforts.

As we see, there is a relatively strong resistance among both black and white evangelicals to a *pro forma* following of a pastor's recommendation. About half of white evangelicals say their pastors' views would make no difference. The other half say they might take it into account but would not necessarily vote for that candidate. As we see, blacks are a little more likely to say they would take their minister's view into account than are whites.

Among white evangelicals, those who attend religious services several times a week, those for whom religion is extremely important in their daily lives, and those who are self-defined fundamentalists, are slightly more likely than others to say that they might take into account their pastor's recommendation. However, in no definable sub-set of our evangelical sample (based on religious measures) is there a *strong* indication that the minister's views would be taken into account.

Television and Religion

The extraordinarily pervasive impact of television in this country makes the U.S. a "global village." It does not escape the attention of those who study religion carefully that television can potentially be utilized as a significant instrument for reaching religious individuals and mobilizing them to political action. In this study, we have asked a series of questions designed to examine how evangelicals and fundamentalists relate to specifically religious programming on their televisions.

The relationship between the mass media in this country—radio and television—and religion is not one which has been newly or recently established. Radio evangelists were not shy in the 1920's, 1930's, and 1940's about using the mass medium of radio to their own advantage. There are numerous examples—including Amy Semple McPherson and the Reverend McLaughlin—of evangelists who created enormous followings through radio, and who apparently have had a significant impact on the attitudes and behaviors of those listening. Some of the teachings of radio evangelists were specifically political, particularly directed at the perceived influence of communism in this country.

The use of television as a vehicle for tying together religion and politics, however, is a more recent phenomenon. The 1950's and 1960's found TV more often than not used for the live telecast of local church services, along with fairly straightforward half-hour programs developed by organized religious entities. Additionally, perhaps the most well-known use of television by religious individuals or religious bodies up to the 1970's were the occasional appearances of the three or four night telecasts ("Crusades") of evangelist Billy Graham.

Table 8.5. Importance of Endorsement

"What if the pastor or minister of your church recommended that you vote for a particular candidate for a political office? Trying to be as honest as you can, which of the following do you think best describes how you would react?"

All Respondents	Definitely Vote For 2.6%	Vote For If No Conflict 7.9%	Take Into Account 43.5%	No Difference 44.5%	Don't Know 1.5%	n = 1000
Born-Again?						
Yes	3.3	7.6	44.8	43.1	1.2	578
No	1.7	8.3	41.7	46.5	1.9	422
Frequency of Church Attendance						
Several Times/Week	2.0	7.1	52.6	36.2	2.0	196
Once per Week	2.3	8.2	43.9	44.6	1.1	440
Nearly every Week	3.0	10.8	46.4	38.6	1.2	166
Once per Month	2.8	8.3	27.8	59.7	1.4	72
Seldom/Never	4.0	4.0	33.3	56.4	2.4	126
Importance of Religion						
Extremely	2.7	9.2	49.4	36.5	2.2	403
Very	3.0	7.3	41.2	47.5	1.0	396
Somewhat	1.5	6.5	36.3	54.7	1.0	201

All Respondents	Definitely Vote For 2.6%	Vote For If No Conflict 7.9%	Take Into Account 43.5%	No Difference 44.5%	Don't Know 1.5%	n = 1000
Creation Story in Bible						
Literally True	2.7	8.9	43.5	43.7	1.2	405
True Account	3.2	7.8	45.7	41.6	1.6	370
Man's Feelings	0.6	7.8	42.8	48.3	0.6	180
Don't Know	4.4	0.0	28.9	60.0	6.7	45
Fundamentalist?						
Yes	3.6	7.6	47.7	40.1	1.0	197
No	2.3	8.1	42.5	45.6	1.5	649
Unsure	2.6	7.8	42.2	45.5	2.0	154
Sword of the Lord I.D.?						
Heard of	5.8	6.4	40.5	45.7	1.7	173
Never Heard of	1.9	8.2	44.1	44.3	1.5	827
Denomination						
Baptist	2.2	8.0	43.8	45.3	0.7	274
Methodist	3.3	6.7	43.3	45.0	1.7	120
Lutheran	1.5	9.2	35.4	53.9	0.0	65
High-Status Denom.	1.5	7.7	44.6	46.2	0.0	65
Conservative Denom.	5.1	8.8	43.8	40.9	1.5	137
Catholic	2.3	7.3	45.4	42.2	2.8	218
Other Denom.	0.0	12.1	39.7	46.6	1.7	58
None Specified	3.2	4.8	46.0	42.9	3.2	63

The 1970's found a new phenomenon developing. A greater amount of TV time became available as independent TV stations and UHF stations came on the air and were in need of programming. The coming of cable and satellite transmission also made it possible to develop networks which could and do coexist outside of the big three networks. Thus, the time period from the mid-1970's to the present has seen an increasing use of television on a more constant basis by a wide variety of groups or entities who might otherwise not have access to large numbers of viewers.

Coexistent with this trend, of course, has been the increasing emphasis by certain religious groups, organizations and individuals in this country on the role that religion can potentially play or should potentially play in influencing political behavior and political attitudes. *The two have become connected.* Those individuals who feel that religion should have a role in the political process in this country have found that television as it exists now provides the perfect forum for encouraging this eventuality. Thus, it is of particular interest for us to examine what those of a more religious nature in this country—the evangelicals and fundamentalists studied in this project—say about the role of television in influencing their *own* political attitudes and behavior.

Use of Religious Broadcasting by Evangelicals in this Country

We estimate that about one-third of evangelicals in this country view religious programming on television on a regular basis. This estimate excludes the viewing of local church services on television. The survey question on which this estimate is based specifically asked people how often they viewed religious programs such as "The 700 Club, PTL, The Old Time Gospel Hour, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggert, Rex Hombard, and so forth—other than the services of local churches." About 30% of our evangelical sample report watching services about once a week or more frequently, with 5% saying they watch once a day, 10% saying they watch two or three times a week, and 15% saying they watch once a week. About one-third report that they *never* watch this type of programming (35%), and another 19% say they hardly ever watch this type of service. Thus, we estimate that there is a hard core constituency of about one-third who watch these types of programs regularly, while over 50% of evangelicals hardly ever or never watch this type of programming.

Table 8.6. Frequency of Watching Television Programs

	2-7 Times Each Week	Once Each Week	1-3 Times Each Month	Not Very Often	Never	n =
All Respondents	**15.2%**	**15.3%**	**11.2%**	**23.4%**	**34.9%**	**1000**
Born-Again?						
Yes	20.9	17.8	11.8	21.3	28.2	578
No	7.4	11.9	10.4	26.3	44.1	422

All Respondents	**2-7 Times Each Week** **15.2%**	**Once Each Week** **15.3%**	**1-3 Times Each Month** **11.2%**	**Not Very Often** **23.4%**	**Never** **34.9%**	**n =** **1000**
Frequency of Church Attendance						
Several Times/Week	25.0	17.4	6.6	22.5	28.6	196
Once per Week	15.0	14.6	11.4	24.8	34.3	440
Nearly every Week	12.7	16.3	18.1	18.7	34.3	166
Once per Month	5.6	19.4	15.3	25.0	34.7	72
Seldom/Never	9.5	11.1	6.4	25.4	47.6	126
Importance of Religion						
Extremely	21.8	18.6	10.4	21.3	27.8	403
Very	12.6	14.4	13.4	24.8	34.9	396
Somewhat	7.0	10.5	8.5	24.9	49.3	201
Creation Story in Bible						
Literally	18.8	18.0	11.1	23.0	29.1	405
True Account	15.4	15.7	14.3	24.9	29.7	370
Man's Feelings	5.6	10.6	7.8	20.6	55.6	180
Don't Know	20.0	6.7	0.0	26.7	46.7	45
Fundamentalist?						
Yes	16.8	19.3	7.1	28.4	28.4	197
No	15.1	13.4	12.8	22.0	36.7	649
Unsure	13.6	18.2	9.7	22.7	35.7	154
Sword of the Lord I.D.?						
Heard of	18.5	16.2	8.7	23.1	33.5	173
Never Heard of	14.5	15.1	11.7	23.5	35.2	827
Denomination						
Baptist	21.2	20.1	13.5	20.8	24.5	274
Methodist	16.7	18.3	10.8	27.5	26.7	120
Lutheran	6.2	9.2	13.9	32.3	38.5	65
High-Status Denom.	13.9	6.2	7.7	32.3	40.0	65
Conservative Denom.	18.3	21.2	15.3	15.3	29.9	137
Catholic	6.9	10.6	7.8	22.9	51.8	218
Other Denom.	13.8	10.3	6.9	24.1	44.8	58
None Specified	20.6	12.7	9.5	27.0	30.2	63
Race						
Black	25.8	33.0	15.5	12.4	13.4	97
White	13.9	13.1	10.6	24.8	37.7	871
Other	18.8	21.9	15.6	18.8	25.0	32
Education						
No High School Degree	21.1	25.5	10.6	19.9	23.0	161
High School Grad	17.6	15.2	11.5	23.0	32.7	330
Some College	12.3	14.0	10.6	25.3	37.7	292
College Grad	9.7	8.3	13.8	22.1	46.2	145
Grad School	13.9	12.5	8.3	27.8	37.5	72
Age						
18-24	5.2	12.1	12.9	21.6	48.3	116
25-34	14.0	12.6	11.3	19.8	42.3	222
35-44	11.8	13.9	11.8	24.6	38.0	187
45-54	15.6	19.2	12.1	27.0	26.2	141

	2-7 Times Each Week	Once Each Week	1-3 Times Each Month	Not Very Often	Never	n =
All Respondents	**15.2%**	**15.3%**	**11.2%**	**23.4%**	**34.9%**	**1000**
55-64	18.6	16.0	8.3	24.4	32.7	156
65+	23.8	19.1	11.3	25.0	20.8	168
No Answer	20.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	50.0	10
Total Family Income						
Under $10,000	25.9	23.5	7.1	20.0	23.5	85
$10,000-$19,999	18.4	16.0	11.9	24.6	29.1	244
$20,000-$29,999	12.3	17.4	12.3	24.1	34.0	253
$30,000-$39,999	9.8	14.9	13.2	24.7	37.4	174
$40,000+	11.7	7.1	8.4	22.1	50.7	154
Refused	21.1	14.4	11.1	21.1	32.2	90
Gender						
Male	13.3	14.3	11.3	25.6	35.6	399
Female/At Home	19.0	14.8	10.3	21.3	34.5	310
Female/Employed	13.8	17.2	12.0	22.7	34.4	291
Religion						
Protestant	16.7	17.2	12.3	24.5	29.3	669
Catholic	6.5	9.6	9.6	23.0	51.3	230
Other	24.8	15.8	7.9	16.8	34.7	101
Political Target Groups						
Conservative Republicans	11.8	13.4	8.7	29.1	37.0	254
Moderate/Liberal Republicans	5.8	10.1	13.0	27.5	43.5	69
Ticket-Splitters	15.1	15.5	11.2	26.2	32.0	206
Conservative Democrats	18.9	20.1	13.3	18.5	29.3	249
Moderate/Liberal Democrats	18.0	13.5	11.3	18.5	38.7	222

The data show variations—as we might predict—in the type of evangelical who is most likely to watch such programming. We see first that there is not a strong gender gap in viewing of religious programming, despite the conventional wisdom which has indicated in the past that females constitute a large core of those who watch. We do find that a *slightly* higher percentage of females in the home watch religious programs at least once a week than do employed females or males, but this percent is only about a five or six percentage point difference (19% of females in the home watch at least once a week, compared to 14% of employed females and 13% of males). There is additionally no variation in the percent of these three gender groups who claim that they never watch religious programming.

There *is* a relationship between age and the viewing of religious programming, with older evangelicals more likely to report watching frequently than younger evangelicals. Older individuals in general in America watch television more frequently than younger individuals, so some of this relationship may simply be explained by a basic TV exposure factor, rather than by a specific desire on the part of the older people to watch these evangelical programs. Nevertheless, the data do show clearly that while almost half (48%) of young evangelicals, those aged 18-24, say they never watch religious programming, only about one-fifth (21%) of those 65 and older report that they never watch. Additionally, while only 5% of the young group say that they watch at least once a week, fully 24% of those 65 and older report that they watch once a week. These, of course, represent the two extreme age groups, but we find in general a linear trend relating age to viewing, such that the older the individual (with minor exceptions) the more likely he or she is to view religious programming. The "tipping" point comes at age 45, with those 44 years and younger below average in their viewing of religious programming, and those 45 years or older above average in their viewing of religious programming.

We know that socioeconomic status is related to age and that older individuals in the population in general have lower levels of education and lower incomes.[2] Thus, it is not surprising that overall we find those with the lowest levels of education and the lowest incomes are the most frequent viewers of televised religious programs. For example, 46% of those with less than high school educations watch religious programming once a week or more. Half of those making under $10,000 a year watch once a week or more (compared to our sample average of 30%). The same trends hold across other education/income groups, although we do find a slight tendency for those with graduate school educations to view religious programming more frequently than those who are just college graduates.

Given the relationship among party affiliation, socioeconomic status and age, it is again not surprising that we find that it is Democrats who are more likely to view religious programming than Republicans. For example, 39% of conservative Democrats watch religious programming at least once a week, compared to 30% of the average evangelical in the sample and 25% of conservative Republicans.

Demographically, our conclusion is that the largest predictor of viewing of religious programming on television is age—with the general tendency for older evangelicals to be more likely to be frequent viewers than younger evangelicals. *This age relationship thus creates a situation in which those with lower socioeconomic status and Democrats are those most likely to report viewing religious programming on television.*

Within our evangelical sample, *there is strong evidence to support the conclusion that the most frequent viewers of religious programs on TV are those who are already most religious and most fundamentalist.* These data support many other forms of research in the sociology of religion over the past ten to twenty years which give evidence that those individuals who attend evangelical crusades and meetings, and those who participate in other forms of non-church religious activities, are most likely those who *are already very religious.*

We can look at these data a little more specifically. We find a strong correlation between attendance at religious services and watching religious programs on TV. Forty-two percent (42%) of those who attend church services several times a week watch religious programming compared to only 21% of those who seldom attend church. Additionally, the more important the individual feels religion is to him in his daily life, the more likely he is to watch programming. (The general hypothesis used to explain this relationship is that those who are already religious use religious programming to reaffirm and confirm their religious views, although these data do not allow us to rule out the hypothesis that those who watch this programming become more religious from having watched the programming.)

There is a slight tendency for self-defined fundamentalists to report watching religious programming more than those who do not define themselves as fundamentalists, although it is not large. Those who say that the Genesis account of the Bible reflects just man's feelings are significantly *less* likely to watch the programming than those who believe either that the Bible is literally true or that it is a true account. Born-again Christians are more likely to report watching than those who are not born again. Thus, for all of our fundamentalist measures, *we find some tendency for the more religious and fundamentalist individuals to be those who watch religious programming.*

Importantly, we note that those who feel that religious leaders and groups should have an active role in the political process in this country are significantly *more* likely to watch TV programs than those who do not (38% of those who want religious leaders and groups to have an active role watch at least once a week, compared to the 20% of those who want no involvement between politics and religion who report watching at least once a week.)

Our conclusion here is that religious programming on television is reaching those who are already high on various measures of both fundamentalism and religiosity. It is these individuals who are more likely to be in favor of religion being involved with politics than those who do not watch programming. *Thus, we see that religious programming has the potential for activating the more fundamentalist religiously involved component of the American evangelical population, and that there is a strong potential for involving these individuals politically.*

Opinions About Religious TV Programs

A bare majority of the evangelical sample report a favorable opinion of these types of religious programs (53%), while a full 30% report an unfavorable opinion. Additionally, among evangelicals, a slight plurality have an unfavorable opinion of the Moral Majority (see Table 6.13). The same pattern holds true for opinions of Jerry Falwell. The Moral Majority and Jerry Falwell were used in this study as representatives of the types of individuals found on these types of TV programs. *We see evidence of some backlash towards TV evangelists among our broad evangelical sample.*

It is not surprising that those who watch religious programming most often have the most favorable opinion of it. Almost 90% of those who watch this type of programming two to seven times a week have a favorable opinion, while only

Table 8.7. Opinion of Televised Religious Programs

	Strongly Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Strongly Unfavorable	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**27.3%**	**25.7%**	**11.9%**	**18.1%**	**17.0%**	**1000**
Born-Again?						
Yes	31.8	27.2	10.4	14.5	16.1	578
No	21.1	23.7	14.0	23.0	18.3	422
Frequency of Church Attendance						
Several Times/Week	38.3	24.5	10.7	18.4	8.2	196
Once per Week	26.4	28.9	12.3	15.7	16.8	440
Nearly every Week	25.3	24.7	9.0	24.1	16.9	166
Once per Month	29.2	23.6	13.9	8.3	25.0	72
Seldom/Never	15.1	19.1	15.1	23.8	27.0	126
Importance of Religion						
Extremely	36.7	24.6	9.2	16.4	13.2	403
Very	24.5	29.6	13.4	15.9	16.7	396
Somewhat	13.9	20.4	14.4	25.9	25.4	201
Creation Story in Bible						
Literally True	34.3	24.7	8.6	15.6	16.8	405
True Account	27.3	27.3	13.2	16.8	15.4	370
Man's Feelings	14.4	23.9	16.7	27.8	17.2	180
Don't Know	15.6	28.9	11.1	13.3	31.1	45
Fundamentalist?						
Yes	35.5	20.8	11.7	21.8	10.2	197
No	25.7	25.1	12.9	17.7	18.5	649
Unsure	23.4	34.4	7.8	14.9	19.5	154
Sword of the Lord I.D.?						
Heard of	27.8	20.2	14.5	23.7	13.9	173
Never Heard of	27.2	26.8	11.4	16.9	17.7	827
Denomination						
Baptist	35.0	27.7	8.4	13.9	15.0	274
Methodist	20.8	35.0	10.8	16.7	16.7	120
Lutheran	21.5	21.5	21.5	20.0	15.4	65
High-Status Denom.	20.0	15.4	16.9	27.7	20.0	65
Conservative Denom.	32.1	26.3	11.0	13.9	16.8	137
Catholic	20.6	22.5	13.3	22.5	21.1	218
Other Denom.	32.8	22.4	15.5	22.4	6.9	58
None Specified	27.0	27.0	7.9	17.5	20.6	63
Race						
Black	50.5	26.8	4.1	8.3	10.3	97
White	24.2	25.7	13.0	19.2	17.9	871
Other	40.6	21.9	6.3	18.8	12.5	32
Education						
No High School Degree	44.7	23.0	6.2	9.2	16.8	161
High School Grad	26.7	30.0	10.3	17.3	15.8	330
Some College	25.0	25.3	12.3	18.5	18.8	292
College Grad	17.9	21.4	19.3	23.5	17.9	145
Grad School	19.4	22.2	15.3	29.2	13.9	72

	Strongly Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Strongly Unfavorable	Unsure	n =
All Respondents	**27.3%**	**25.7%**	**11.9%**	**18.1%**	**17.0%**	**1000**
Age						
18-24	25.0	20.7	15.5	26.7	12.1	116
25-34	23.0	27.0	15.3	19.4	15.3	222
35-44	26.2	22.5	12.3	19.8	19.3	187
45-54	29.1	28.4	10.6	17.7	14.2	141
55-64	30.1	25.6	7.7	7.7	21.2	156
65+	32.1	28.6	9.5	11.3	18.5	168
No Answer	20.0	30.0	10.0	20.0	20.0	10
Total Family Income						
Under $10,000	37.7	24.7	10.6	7.1	20.0	85
$10,000-$19,999	34.8	22.5	10.7	15.2	16.8	244
$20,000-$29,999	28.1	27.7	12.3	17.4	14.6	253
$30,000-$39,999	15.5	28.2	16.1	21.8	18.4	174
$40,000 +	18.8	24.7	13.0	29.2	14.3	154
Refused	32.2	26.7	5.6	12.2	23.3	90
Gender						
Male	25.6	22.6	11.0	22.3	18.6	399
Female/At Home	29.7	27.4	11.3	15.2	16.5	310
Female/Employed	27.2	28.2	13.8	15.5	15.5	291
Occupation						
Upper White-Collar	24.4	22.0	17.1	23.6	13.0	246
Lower White-Collar	29.6	20.4	9.3	23.2	17.6	108
Upper Blue-Collar	26.8	31.7	8.5	15.6	17.4	224
Lower Blue-Collar	33.3	17.1	12.8	21.7	15.4	117
Retired	27.5	32.2	10.4	10.0	19.9	211
Not in Labor Force	25.5	23.4	11.7	18.1	21.3	94
Political Target Groups						
Conservative Republicans	22.4	26.4	13.4	19.3	18.5	254
Moderate/Liberal Republicans	18.8	24.6	18.8	13.0	24.6	69
Ticket-Splitters	27.7	22.3	15.1	16.0	18.9	206
Conservative Democrats	35.7	25.7	9.2	16.9	12.5	249
Moderate/Liberal Democrats	25.7	28.4	8.1	21.6	16.2	222

23% of those who *never* watch the programming have a favorable opinion of it. The negative opinions of this type of religious program are very strong in those who do not watch the programming at all or those who do not watch very often, as well. This phenomenon is called "voting with your feet." Those who watch it like it, those who don't like it, don't watch. What this suggests, of course, is that the decision not to watch religious programming on TV is not necessarily a result of apathy or failure to watch television at all, or a simple choice to watch something else. It shows that the body of individuals who never watch this type program (35% of our sample of evangelicals) are actually negative towards it by over a 2:1 ratio. Because of this, we think it unlikely that evangelicals not watching the programming now can be converted to watch it. This suggests there will continue to be only a hard core minority of evangelicals who approve of the programming and who will continue to watch it.

In a similar light, we see that those who watch this type of programming most often are significantly more likely to have positive opinions of the Moral Majority and Jerry Falwell than are others. Very frequent viewers (two to seven times a week) have a favorable to unfavorable ratio of opinion of Falwell which is significantly greater than 2:1. On the other hand, our group of 35% of evangelicals who never watch this type of religious programming on TV have an unfavorable ratio towards Falwell of 3:1. These same types of relationships are evident in viewer opinions of the Moral Majority, although they are not quite as strong.

Table 8.8. Opinion of Jerry Falwell (by frequency of viewing of religious programs on television)

	Never Heard of Falwell	Heard of Only	Heard of/ Favorable	Heard of/ Unfavorable	Heard of/ No Opinion	n =
Watch 2-7 Times Each Week	12.5%	10.5%	46.1%	18.4%	12.5%	152
Watch Once per Week	20.9	7.8	36.0	20.9	14.4	153
Watch 1-3 Times Each Month	27.7	9.8	25.0	21.4	16.1	112
Watch Rarely	29.1	9.4	20.5	28.6	12.4	234
Never Watch	26.9	10.3	13.5	40.4	8.9	349
All Respondents	24.4	9.7	24.8	29.2	11.9	1000

The same basic types of relationships we find among TV viewing and our demographic, geographic, and religiosity measures are found when we look at opinions of religious programming. Thus, we see that Baptists, older evangelicals, less well educated evangelicals, retired evangelicals, lower income evangelicals, female evangelicals, frequent church attenders, those to whom religion is extremely important in their daily life, those who believe the Bible's Genesis account to be literally true (and to a slightly lesser degree those who think it is a true account), and those who know *The Sword of the Lord*, are all more likely to have a favorable opinion of religious TV programs than are others in the sample. It is important to note briefly the opposite: that unfavorable opinions of this type of religious programming are held most strongly by young evangelicals, well educated evangelicals, upper white-collar evangelicals, high income evangelicals, and those who feel that the Genesis story does not represent a literal or true account of what happened.

Politically, the strongest positive feelings towards these types of programming come from Democrats—particularly conservative Democrats—while Republicans tend to be unsure about their opinions about the programming, a fact which follows from their lower frequency of viewing.

What are we to make of these data? They above all else tell us that there is a hard core constituency of evangelicals in this country who constitute the group that watch non-church service religious programming on TV. These individuals tend in general to be the *most religious* and *most fundamentalist* of all evangelicals—which means that they are also the least well educated, the oldest, and those with the lowest overall socioeconomic status. We have noted that those individuals who do not watch this type of religious programming actually feel rather negative towards it, which suggests that it is unlikely that any greater number of these less religious evangelicals will be converted over to viewership in the months ahead. Finally, we have noted that the demographic pressures or characteristics of the group who watch most often indicate that they are more likely than not to be Democrats, particularly conservative Democrats, and we have noted that those who watch these programs most frequently are also those who are most likely to say that religious organizations should have an active part in political campaigns.

Table 8.9. Importance of Personal Religious Views in Determining 1984 Presidential Vote

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not At All Important	n =
Watch Religious Programs 2-7 Times Each Week	21%	28%	25%	22%	152
Watch Religious Programs Once Each Week	12	24	32	26	153
Watch Religious Programs 1-3 Times Each Month	9	16	29	43	112
Rarely Watch	10	18	29	40	234
Never Watch	7	14	25	50	349
All Respondents	11	19	28	39	1000

To reinforce the last conclusion, we see that those who watch this programming most frequently tell us that their religious views will be most important in the 1984 election. For example, 49% of very frequent viewers of religious programming (two to seven times a week) say their religion will be extremely or very important in their vote in 1984 for President, whereas only 21% of those who never watch the programming say that religion will be extremely or very important. Similarly, while only about one-fifth (22%) of the very frequent viewers say that religion will be unimportant in their vote in November, fully one-half of those who do not watch at all say that religion will be unimportant. (The same basic patterns of trends are evident when our evangelicals look back over the importance of religious views in the 1980 election.)

We find that very frequent viewers are most likely to feel that the religious views of the candidate will be more important than "almost any other factor I take into account" in their vote in 1984, while those who never watch the programming are much less likely to agree with this statement. Similarly, we find about one-third of those who do not watch at all saying that religious views will be less important than most other factors they take into account. Only 9%

of those who watch very frequently agree with that view.

The frequent viewers of religious programming on TV are most predisposed to take religion into account in making a political choice. Evangelicals who do not watch the programming, and who may well have a negative opinion of the programming, are much less predisposed to take religious views into account.

Table 8.10. Importance of Religious and Moral Views of Candidate in Vote Decisions

	More Important Than Just About Any Other Factor	About the Same Importance As Other Factors	Less Important Than Most Other Factors	Unsure	n =
Watch Religious Programs 2-7 Times Each Week	38%	47%	9%	7%	152
Watch Religious Programs Once Each Week	33	46	17	4	153
Watch Religious Programs 1-3 Times Each Month	24	42	30	4	112
Rarely Watch	21	48	28	3	234
Never Watch	17	50	32	2	349
All Respondents	24	48	25	3	1000

Clearly, there is the potential for these religious programs to be a significant and potent political force in this country. Although the viewership of these programs is composed of well less than a half of evangelicals, the hard core of evangelicals who do watch are precisely the types of people who apparently are attitudinally predisposed to listen to what is said on these programs about the religious views of political candidates. In short, these programs can provide a very positive and useful forum for individual preachers or religious organizations to persuade viewers to vote for given candidates.

Summary

We have reviewed in this chapter some *direct* evidence that among white evangelicals in this country, the local church is not being used heavily as a forum for political expression. There are no strong indications in these data that evangelicals or sub-sets of more fundamentalist evangelicals are being approached within their church context to vote for political candidates or to "feel" certain ways about political issues. Additionally, we do not see strong evidence that the evangelicals or even more fundamentalist evangelicals in our sample would necessarily be receptive to these types of political attempts. Thus, we cannot say at this time that the evidence shows that the local church is being used or will be used as a structural forum for political organization and political voting.

The data do show—as we would predict—that blacks are more likely to encounter political recommendations in the context of their church than whites.

We found *indirect* evidence that televised religious programs—other than local churches—have the *potential* for being an effective forum for political activity. This indirect evidence is based on the finding that very religious and fundamentalist evangelicals, and those who feel that religion in politics *should be* connected, are those most likely to watch and approve of the religious programs. We did not ask whether or not these evangelicals believe that they would pay attention to political recommendations issued over the TV. Thus, we are *inferring* that if this fervent group of religiously involved fundamentalists watch and approve of the programs, they would be potentially more receptive to political action advocated by these programs. However, we do note that these same religious individuals do not necessarily feel strongly that they would take into account their local pastor's recommendation on voting or political activities.

Footnotes

1. See Robert C. Liebman, "Mobilizing the Moral Majority," in Robert C. Liebman and Robert Wuthnow, *The New Christian Right* (Hawthorne, N.Y.: Aldine, 1983), pp. 50-73; Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978); Doug McAdams, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 1930-1970 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1975).

2. United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1984*, 10th Edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), Table No. 225, page 146.

Chapter IX
Conclusion

It is difficult to discuss the central topic of this volume without raising some eyebrows. Religion and politics are individually two very controversial subjects, and when they are combined they become predictably explosive. Any study which addresses evangelical political involvement is likely to be challenged by those who do not like its conclusions. We are not arguing that evangelicalism and fundamentalism are either "good" or "bad" for the individual or the polity, but we do agree with Stephen Warner that:

> Sociologists who speak of mainline, liberal lay believers with respect and fellow-feeling treat evangelicalism as if they were witnesses to a bizarre spectacle. It is as if evangelicals were denizens of the zoo . . . No doubt because of this perceptual distance from the sociologists' worldview, evangelicalism is dismissed out of hand as irrelevant or quaint at best.[1]

It is time for social scientists to examine the phenomenon dispassionately, and we have tried to do so by identifying evangelical attitudes on a variety of issues and placing those attitudes and preferences into a larger political context.

We will summarize the results of this study by answering three basic questions concerning the evangelical voter in this country. These questions—from our perspective—are the ones which are most fundamentally important to the broad subject matter of this volume.

1. *What is the best way to define the evangelical and/or fundamentalist Christian in this country today?* This is obviously a crucial question since any discussion of how evangelicals or fundamentalists affect our political system *must* be based on some type of understanding of whom we are talking about. Our study has shown us, if nothing else, that there is no easy answer to this very basic question.

There has always been an understanding among scholars who study religion that the relative religiosity of individuals can be measured in many different ways. It is not surprising that our attempt to measure individuals who are members of a very sensitive and controversial subset of Christians in this country—evangelicals or fundamentalists—would involve problems.

Some individuals who call themselves evangelicals and fundamentalists have attempted to construct their own definitions of these terms. Similarly, scholars who have looked into this area and theologians with whom the scholars have consulted have also made decisions about various definitions of evangelicals and fundamentalists in this country. Finally, the media—always susceptible to labeling or summarizing terms—have used "fundamentalist" and "evangelical" without much precise understanding of whom they are talking about.

What everyone seems to agree on is very basic: in the entire spectrum of Christianity as represented in the United States today, there are some individuals who take their Christianity more seriously, have had more intensive and particularistic types of religious experiences, and have made decisions to let religion be an important part of their life, than have other Christians. Some Christians as well have more *fundamental* views than others on how rigidly certain writings and tenets of their religion should be interpreted. It is thought that these types of Christians may have different and distinct patterns of perceiving and relating to our political system, and thus that these people may have a certain identifiable influence on the political system. These thoughts have formed the basis for this study.

The approach we have used in this study gives us the best chance to answer questions about defining evangelicals and fundamentalists. We included in our basic sample all Christians who met an evangelical screen based on self-report of a strict interpretation of the person of Jesus Christ and either self-report of having undergone a conversion experience or belief in the need to accept Jesus Christ in order to be saved. In addition, we included several different measures of more fundamentalist religious attitudes and behaviors within our study, and have spent considerable time in the course of the analysis presented in this volume looking at the impact of these measures.

We have discovered that the definitional criteria that are employed in defining evangelicals and fundamentalists *can* make a difference in whether or not we find relationships between these individuals and the political system. A summary of these findings yields the following conclusions:

- If a *belief in a literal Bible* is used as a defining criterion for inclusion in any evangelical or fundamentalist sample, the resulting sample is strongly biased toward downscale, less well-educated Christians. It is our conclusion that many of the differences found between a Biblical literalist group and the general population may be the result of the educational differences between the two groups rather than a result of actual religious differences. We find in particular that there are only limited independent relationships between belief in a literal Bible and political attitudes once we have controlled for education. Any researcher or scholar who identifies Biblical literalists and then proceeds to say that this group is different than other individuals ***based on their Biblical literalism*** could be misreading the basic nature of this relationship. Scholars who decide that Christians who do not adhere to a strict literalist interpretation of the Bible are not fundamentalists or evangelicals run the risk of excluding numbers of Christians in this country who in fact have very intense and powerful religious convictions and feelings and who in fact may be instrumental individuals in the political spectrum. This is a key point, since the majority of definitions of evangelicals employed over the past ten years have used some kind of Biblical literalist criteria.

- *Born-again Christians.* Only 58% of our evangelical sample responds affirmatively when asked if they have had a born-again conversion experience. On the other hand, 97% of our sample say that they believe that a Christian must accept Christ as their personal Savior in order to go to heaven and avoid eternal damnation. Thus, the use of a born again self-identity definitional criterion would exclude about 40% of evangelical Christians from an evangelical sample—even though these Christians agree with the fairly strong statement that a conversion experience is necessary to go to heaven. Since these people are saying that one must accept Jesus Christ as Savior in order to go to heaven, we must assume that they personally have made this acceptance, even if they deny having a specifically "born-again" experience. The alternative would require us to conclude that almost half of evangelicals believe that they will not go to heaven (i.e., arguing that one *must* accept Jesus as the Savior even though the respondent has not himself accepted Jesus). Therefore, we assume that a sizable percentage of evangelicals are not familiar with the "born-again" concept or for some reason do not apply it to themselves. If this is indeed the case, the use of a "born-again" screen to identify evangelicals eliminates a large group of people who probably should be included in an evangelical sample.
- *Self-reported fundamentalism.* One obvious way to identify fundamentalists in this country is simply to ask people if they consider themselves fundamentalists. This technique is used often in identifying conservatives and liberals, in identifying Republicans and Democrats, and in other situations where we rely on the individual's self-report. In our study, as we have seen, only 20% of evangelicals call themselves fundamentalists. Additionally, it is worth noting that only 22% of those who believe in a literal Bible apply the term fundamentalist to themselves, while 22% of those who say they are "born again" are willing to call themselves fundamentalists. Thus, there is no one-to-one correlation between acceptance of this label and other measures of a depth of religious feeling. Our conclusion is that self-reported fundamentalism may be a useful measure in some situations, but certainly not as a general or overall criteria. Self-report will identify a group of people who are willing to accept the label "fundamentalist," but it will exclude people who ordinarily would be considered fundamentalists on the basis of their beliefs or behavior.
- *Knowledge of Sword of the Lord publication.* This measure has not been used extensively, but is an interesting measure of certain groups of Christians in this country who have knowledge of this particular fundamentalist publication. Our study shows that those Christians who recognize this publication are disproportionately from the South, but otherwise they have no demographic differences

from those who do not. *Sword of the Lord* recognizers are more likely to attend religious services frequently and slightly more likely to consider themselves fundamentalists than others. This group *does* have an independent and distinct tendency to vote for Walter Mondale—as we have noted in Chapter VII.

- *Standard Sociological Measures of Religious Intensity and Involvement.* We included in this study measurements of self-reported importance of religion in daily lives, as well as attendance at religious services. As we have noted in the study, self-reported daily importance of religion is a very good predictor in a variety of situations. This may not be surprising. The relationships we find show that if a person believes that religion is very important to him daily, that person is also likely to have more religious positions on certain issues than other people. Our conclusion here is that self-reported intensity of religious feeling is a *necessary* measure for adequate understanding of the phenomenon under question.

2. *Are identifiable evangelical and fundamentalist religious groups in this country different politically than other voters?* The answer to this question is yes—in some instances. Although our survey does not include non-evangelicals, we can extrapolate from our data about the relationship between strongly religious individuals and the less religious. The greatest impact of religion is on those *political* attitudes which have a *moral* or *religious character* to them. More religious or fundamentalist evangelicals are most likely to feel strongly about allowing voluntary school prayer, allowing tuition tax credits, not allowing birth control information in public schools, and so forth. There are some relationships between evangelical or fundamentalist status and attitudes on other political issues, but these relationships are less straightforward. Evangelical opinion, in fact, splits on a number of issues, including defense spending, the nuclear freeze and abortion. We do not find much relationship between an individual Christian's being a fundamentalist and his or her party identification. Additionally, we do not find much indication of an impact of an individual's fundamentalism on his or her projected vote in the 1984 Presidential race. We *do* find some basis for concluding that very fundamentalist voters are somewhat more likely to say they are going to take religion into account in their vote in elections, but this tendency is not large.

In summary, we have found that the evangelical or fundamentalist nature of an individual voter will have an impact on the political process only indirectly, if at all. It is our view that a person's deeply felt fundamentalist religious view must be explicitly activated and tied into a vote for a given candidate in a given race if the religious beliefs are going to have a measurable effect. There is no *necessary* reason why a fundamentalist Christian in this country is going to vote differently than his or her neighbor with the same geographic and demographic characteristics.

These points are worth stressing. Individuals who have strongly held evangelical and fundamentalist views are most likely to translate these views into sharp and distinct positions on religious or moral attitudes. They are next most likely to translate their fundamentalism into attitudinal positions on policy questions which are not directly related to moral or religious aspects. They are on average *not at all likely* to translate their fundamentalism to identification with a particular political party in this country, and as of 1983 there was no strong tendency for these individuals to translate their evangelical and fundamentalist religious nature into a significantly greater than average support for President Reagan over challenger Walter Mondale. In short, fundamentalists are different than other Christians, but they are different on *religious* grounds—a not surpising finding. What may be more surprising, we re-emphasize, is that *the voter in this country who is different than another voter on religious grounds is not necessarily going to be strongly different on political grounds.*

3. *Can voters in this country who are evangelicals and fundamentalists be mobilized or activated to the extent where they will become a significant force in the American political process?* The answer to this question is more speculative. We have found that simply ensuring that larger numbers of evangelicals or fundamentalists show up at the polls on election day does nothing except bring to the polls a group of people who politically reflect their demographic and geographic characteristics. Thus, from a partisan perspective, mass registrations of people who can be identified as fundamentalist Christians bring to the polls more Democrats than Republicans, if nothing else is done.

What is necessary if this group of individuals is going to become a significant voting bloc in this country is that they be "touched" on particular issues in reference to particular candidates. We believe the data indicate that the fundamentalism or religiosity of this group of individuals can be made relevant to particular issues and candidates and thus can be "used" to bring about a higher than normal vote for given candidates.

The relevant point here is that these kinds of mobilization efforts are particular to certain *issues* and certain *candidates* in selected races. There is not going to be, in our opinion, a one-time massive mobilization of these people which will profoundly affect the American political system across races and across time through the years to come. This group of individuals is not, in short, comparable to other blocs, such as black voters, in this country. There is no built-in connection between an individual's fundamentalist views and the Republican Party. Perhaps this kind of connection can be built in the years to come (and President Reagan is attempting to draw it to his particular position in 1984), but this will be a difficult process.

Perhaps the major problem for both conservatives and liberals when trying to appeal to evangelical voters is that evangelicals hold a mixture of views on controversial policy questions. A majority support voluntary school prayer in the public schools and tuition tax credits, but they also support the Equal Rights Amendment and the dissemination of birth control information in the public schools. Slight pluralities favor both increased defense spending and the nuclear freeze, but there are high levels of opposition to both. This ideological hodgepodge holds true even for the more religious or fundamentalist subsamples.

While all of this is true, there *are* issues on which the more religious or fundamentalist evangelicals separate themselves out from other evangelicals and from non-evangelicals. Whether or not this group will be galvanized to form an electoral bloc (motivated by support for prayer in school, for example) depends on the abilities of particular campaigns to create a linkage between the appropriate issues and the corresponding candidates and campaigns. It also depends on the ability of various grass roots organizations to "educate" prospective voters on the implications of particular policies and political developments. Simply telling evangelicals that they should register and vote is not enough to assure support for a particular candidate.

This is particularly important when we review the evidence that shows that many fundamentalists (over half) do not believe that religion should be an important factor when they make a decision on voting. We have also concluded that the local church is limited in its ability to be an activating agent for turning evangelical and fundamentalist Christians in this country into a potent political force. There has apparently been very little activity on the part of ministers in white churches on a political front (especially compared to political activity in black churches), and our data indicate that evangelicals and fundamentalists do not believe that the local church is an appropriate forum for politicking. However, some of this opposition may be misleading. For example, while evangelicals appear to prefer that their church stay away from partisan politics and while they say that they would not necessarily follow the advice of their ministers, it is possible that they could be affected by discussions about general moral issues if these issues were politicized during an election campaign. Voters do not have to realize that sermons have a political element for those same sermons to have a political impact. Naturally, some evangelicals and fundamentalists will be receptive to a direct appeal for political involvement from inside their churches. Our data indicate, however, that other evangelicals would find such political networking in churches inappropriate. Anyone seeking to mobilize evangelicals must be aware of this fact.

Our data do show, on the other hand, that the minority of evangelicals and fundamentalists who watch non-church broadcast religious programming—such as the Jerry Falwell Old Time Gospel Hour, Jimmy Swaggert, PTL, and so forth—*are* in a better position to be mobilized by particular religious groups. The "hard-core" group of individuals who faithfully watch these programs tend to take their religion very seriously and tend to be the types of individuals who feel that religious views should be an important component of their voting decision. The problem here is that the majority of evangelicals and fundamentalists do not watch these types of programs and in fact do not particularly like them. Thus, we do not see a great deal of potential for these types of programs to *expand* their impact beyond the hard-core group of older downscale religious viewers who currently comprise their audience. In short, our data corroborate other data which show that these types of religious programs reach a small dedicated hard-core group of already religious people, and do not have the potential for much impact outside of this hard-core group. Thus, these programs are "preaching to the committed," and while they can be instrumental in activating these committed Christians to vote for particular individuals, they likely will not have a broad or massive impact on larger groups of fundamentalists or evangelicals in this country.

All in all, the message of this study is that there is no easy way to summarize or categorize the political impact of the evangelical voter in this country today. Evangelicals are almost as varied as the American public at large. For some, religious values and attitudes play or could play an important part in the formation and development of their political attitudes and behaviors. For others, this is clearly not the case. Candidates from both major political parties must come to recognize that the evangelical voter cannot be taken for granted but must be wooed and targeted. In short, the evangelical voter is in many ways not so very different from the American voter.

Footnote

1. R. Stephen Warner, "Theoretical Barriers to the Understanding of Evangelical Christianity," *Sociological Analysis* 40 (Spring, 1979): 3.

APPENDIX I
Distribution of Respondents, by Denomination

Participants in the survey were asked, "What denomination or *type* of church are you a member of?" This open-ended question produced a variety of responses. The list which follows combines slightly different responses (e.g., Independent Baptist, First Baptist and Fundamental Baptist) into general categories (e.g., Baptist).

Baptist	274
Orthodox	3
Catholic	218
Methodist	120
Lutheran	65
Presbyterian*	43
Pentecostal†	22
Church of Christ†	31
Episcopalian*	17
Mormon	14
Church of God†	22
Assembly of God†	10
Disciples of Christ†	9
Nazarene†	13
Seventh Day Adventist	5
Quaker	3
Bible Church†	3
Congregationalist*	5
Congregational Evangelist†	1
Salvation Army	2
Covenant Church	1
Jehovah's Witnesses	1

Christian Science	1
Full Gospel†	2
Unity†	2
Unitarian	2
Dutch Christian Reformed	1
Christian†	16
Christian Reformed†	1
Holiness†	2
Church of the Brethren†	3
Interdenominational	4
Protestant	5
Non-denominational‡	26
No Church‡	33
Other	15
Don't Know/No Answer‡	4

*Categorized as "High-Status" denominations
†Categorized as "Conservative" denominations
‡Categorized as "No Specific Denomination" or "None Specified"

APPENDIX II
Geographic/Census Regions

The table on page 23 gives a state-by-state breakdown of respondents in this survey. Throughout the study, we refer to evangelicals in different regions (e.g., East/North Central, Mountain/Pacific etc.). Those regions are:

New England/Mid-Atlantic
Maine
New Hampshire
Vermont
Massachusetts
Rhode Island
Connecticut
New York
New Jersey
Pennsylvania

East/North Central
Ohio
Indiana
Illinois
Michigan
Wisconsin

West/North Central
Minnesota
Iowa
Missouri
North Dakota
South Dakota
Nebraska
Kansas

South Atlantic
Delaware
Maryland
District of Columbia
Virginia
West Virginia
North Carolina
South Carolina
Georgia
Florida

East/South Central
Kentucky
Tennessee
Alabama
Mississippi

West/South Central
Arkansas
Louisiana
Oklahoma
Texas

Mountain/Pacific
Montana
Idaho
Wyoming
Colorado
New Mexico
Arizona
Utah
Nevada
Washington
California

APPENDIX III

The Evangelical Voter Survey

Hello, I'm ______________________ of Tarrance & Associates, a national research firm. We're calling long-distance from our national telephone center in Houston, Texas. We're talking to people all over the country today about their opinions about religious values, morals and politics.

A. Are you 18 years of age or older? *IF "NO", ASK:* Is there anyone home that is 18? (REPEAT SCREEN)	Yes (CONTINUE)	1
	No (THANK & TERMINATE)	2
B. Are you registered to vote?	Yes (CONTINUE)	1
	No (THANK & TERMINATE)	2
1. First, what is your religious preference? Is it—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?	Protestant (TO 2)	1
	Catholic (TO 2)	2
	Other religion (TO 2)	3
	Hindu, Moslem, Buddhist (THANK AND TERMINATE)	4
	Jewish (THANK AND TERMINATE)	5
	No religion (THANK AND TERMINATE)	6

We're interested in talking with different types of people today all over the country. I'd like to ask you a few questions about your religious beliefs so we can better understand the people to whom we talk.

2. Do you personally believe that Jesus Christ was a real person who lived on this earth and who was also the unique Son of God?	Yes (TO 3)	1
	No (THANK AND TERMINATE)	2
	Don't know (THANK AND TERMINATE)	3

IF "YES" IN QUESTION 2, ASK QUESTION 3 AND QUESTION 4:

3. And, in your opinion, does a person need to personally accept Jesus Christ as his or her savior in order to have eternal salvation and to be saved from eternal hell?	Yes	1
	No	2
	(SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW)	

4. Would you call yourself a *born-again Christian*—that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?	Yes	1
	No	2
	(SEE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW)	

(IF "YES" IN *EITHER* QUESTION 3 *OR* 4, CONTINUE—IF "NO" TO BOTH, THANK AND TERMINATE)

Thinking about something different—

5. What denomination or *type* of church are you a member of? (RECORD *SPECIFIC* NAME OF DENOMINATION OR TYPE OF CHURCH: SOUTHERN BAPTIST, INDEPENDENT BAPTIST, DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, ROMAN CATHOLIC, ETC.—*RECORD FULL ANSWER*) (IF NECESSARY, ASK: AND WHAT IS THE *FULL* NAME OR SPECIFIC TYPE OF YOUR DENOMINATION OR RELIGIOUS GROUP?) (IF NO CHURCH, RECORD APPROPRIATELY—WE DO *NOT* WANT THE NAME OF THE CHURCH)

6. Suppose you had a chance to talk with your U.S. Congressman or Senator. What are one or two of the most important things you would tell him—that is, what are the one or two things you would most want your Congressman or Senator to do or change? (PROBE: PLEASE TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT)

7.	Do you favor or oppose a freeze on U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons at current levels, even if that means the U.S. has slightly fewer weapons? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Favor/strongly	1
		Favor	2
		Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
		Oppose	4
		Oppose/strongly	5
8.	Do you favor or oppose a *tuition tax credit*—where parents are given tax credits if they choose to send their children to private or parochial schools? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Favor/strongly	1
		Favor	2
		Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
		Oppose	4
		Oppose/strongly	5
9.	Are you personally for or against passage of the Equal Rights Amendment? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Favor/strongly	1
		Favor	2
		Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
		Oppose	4
		Oppose/strongly	5
10.	At the present time, prayers are not allowed in the public schools. Do you think that voluntary public prayer should be allowed in public schools? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Favor/strongly	1
		Favor	2
		Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
		Oppose	4
		Oppose/strongly	5
11.	Do you favor or oppose sending U.S. troops to El Salvador and other Central American countries in order to stop the spread of communism? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Favor/strongly (TO 13)	1
		Favor (TO 13)	2
		Unsure (DO NOT READ) (TO 13)	3
		Oppose (TO 12)	4
		Oppose/strongly (TO 12)	5

IF "OPPOSE" OR "OPPOSE STRONGLY" IN QUESTION 11, ASK:

12. Do you favor or oppose sending military aid and military advisors to El Salvador and other Central American countries? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Favor/strongly	1
	Favor	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	Oppose	4
	Oppose/strongly	5

13. Do you feel the U.S. should increase the amount of money we spend on defense, or should we decrease this amount of money? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Increase/strongly	1
	Increase	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	Decrease	4
	Decrease/strongly	5

14. In your opinion, should information on the availability and use of birth control methods be taught to teenagers in the public school system? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Yes/strongly	1
	Yes	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	No	4
	No/strongly	5

Now I'd like to read you a series of statements people have made on the issue of abortion. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with what they have said.

15. Abortion should not be legally available in the U.S. for any reasons. (PROMPT: DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT?) IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Agree/strongly (TO 18)	1
	Agree (TO 18)	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ) (TO 16)	3
	Disagree (TO 16)	4
	Disagree/strongly (TO 16)	5

IF "3", "4", OR "5" IN QUESTION 15, ASK:

16. Abortion should be legally available if the life of the mother is in serious danger. (PROMPT IF NECESSARY)	Agree/strongly	1
	Agree	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	Disagree	4
	Disagree/strongly	5

IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?
(TO 17)

IF "3", "4", OR "5" IN QUESTION 15, ASK:

17. Abortion should be legally available for any adult woman who desires it. (PROMPT IF NECESSARY) IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Agree/strongly	1
	Agree	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	Disagree	4
	Disagree/strongly	5

18. The government should provide poverty level women aid for abortions. (PROMPT IF NECESSARY) IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Agree/strongly	1
	Agree	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	Disagree	4
	Disagree/strongly	5

19. Is your feeling about abortion based on your personal religious views or not? IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Yes/strongly	1
	Yes	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	No	4
	No/strongly	5

20. As you may know, there has been a lot of publicity recently concerning a contagious disease called A-I-D-S or "AIDS." A large percentage of those with this disease are homosexuals. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"The fact that AIDS disease has struck largely in the homosexual community is evidence of God's punishment for homosexuals' immoral and sinful lifestyle." IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?	Agree/strongly	1
	Agree	2
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
	Disagree	4
	Disagree/strongly	5

Think for a moment about the November *1980* national Presidential elections. Jimmy Carter was President and was running for re-election as a Democrat. Ronald Reagan was the Republican nominee. The hostages were being held in Iran, inflation was in double digits, and the country was worried about a crisis of conscience.

21. Do you remember if you voted in that election?

IF 'YES", ASK: Do you happen to remember if you voted for Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan?

Yes/Jimmy Carter (TO 22)	1
Yes/Ronald Reagan (TO 22)	2
Didn't vote/don't remember (DO NOT READ) (TO 23)	3

IF "YES" IN QUESTION 21, ASK:

22. And how important were your religious views and convictions in your voting decision in that election—extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

Extremely important	1
Very important	2
Somewhat important	3
Not at all important	4
Unsure (DO NOT READ)	5

Now think for a minute about the 1982 Congressional elections *last* fall. Ronald Reagan had been President for almost two years, and while inflation was much improved, unemployment had reached the 10 percent level.

23. Do you remember if you voted in that election?

IF "YES", ASK: Do you happen to remember if you voted for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate for U.S. Congress in that election?

Yes/Democratic candidate (TO 24)	1
Yes/Republican candidate (TO 24)	2
Didn't vote/don't remember (DO NOT READ) (TO 25)	3

IF "YES" IN QUESTION 23, ASK:

24. And how important were your religious views and convictions in your voting decision in that election—extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

Extremely important	1
Very important	2
Somewhat important	3
Not at all important	4
Unsure (DO NOT READ)	5

Now, thinking about the election for President *next* year in 1984—

25. If the election for U.S. President were held today and you had to make a choice between—(ROTATE)—(1) Ronald Reagan, the Republican, and (2) Walter Mondale, the Democrat—who would you vote for?

Ronald Reagan	1
Undecided (DO NOT READ)	2
Walter Mondale	3

26. And if the election for President were between—(ROTATE)—(1) Ronald Reagan, the Republican, and (2) John Glenn, the Democrat—who would you vote for?	Ronald Reagan	1
	Undecided (DO NOT READ)	2
	John Glenn	3

27. And how important do you think your religious views and convictions *will be in* determining your vote in the 1984 election for President? (READ ALTERNATIVES)	Extremely important	1
	Very important	2
	Somewhat important	3
	Not at all important	4
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	5

28. Now talking about politics in general, how important are the religious and moral views of a candidate for office in your decision on whether or not to vote for him? (READ LIST)

1) More important than almost any other factor I take into account.	1
2) About the same importance as other factors	2
3) Less important than most other factors I take into account	3

29. *Some people feel* that religious leaders and groups should confine their activities to specific religious activities, and that they should not get involved in politics.

Others feel that religious leaders and groups should take a very active role in politics.

Which of these comes closer to your own opinion?	No involvement in politics	1
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	2
	Active role in politics	3

30. Does your minister or pastor ever talk about politics and give his opinions about what our government should or should not be doing?	Yes (TO 31, 32 & 33)	1
	Unsure (DO NOT READ) (TO 34)	2
	No (TO 34)	3

IF "YES" IN QUESTION 30, ASK:

31. Does he talk about politics and give his opinion about government . . . (READ *EACH* ALTERNATIVE AND GET A RESPONSE TO *EACH*)

	Yes	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	No
a) during his sermons	1	2	3
b) at other times at church	1	2	3
c) outside of church	1	2	3

IF "YES" IN QUESTION 30, ASK:

32. Has he ever given his opinion about the moral or religious character of politicians or political candidates?	Yes	1
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	2
	No	3

IF "YES" IN QUESTION 30, ASK:

33. Has he ever recommended that you vote for particular political candidates?	Yes	1
	Unsure (DO NOT READ)	2
	No	3

34. What if the pastor or minister of your church recommended that you vote for a particular candidate for political office? Trying to be as honest as you can, which of the following do you think *best describes* how you would react—(READ LIST)

1) I would definitely vote for the candidate regardless of anything else involved.	1
2) I would vote for the candidate if it didn't conflict with my own political views.	2
3) I would take my pastor's recommendation into account, but I wouldn't necessarily vote for the candidate.	3
4) It would make no difference in how I voted.	4

35. How often do you attend religious services? (DO NOT READ, RECORD RESPONSE APPROPRIATELY)	Several times a week	01
	Once a week	02
	Nearly every week	03
	2-3 times a month	04
	About once a month	05
	Several times a year	06
	About once or twice a year	07
	Less than once a year	08
	Never	09

36. How important is your religion to you in your daily life—extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

Extremely important	1
Very important	2
Somewhat important	3
Not at all important	4
Unsure (DO NOT READ)	5

Thinking about TV for a minute—

37. Other than the services of local churches, how often do you watch religious programs such as the 700 Club, PTL, the Old Time Gospel Hour, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggert, Rex Humbard, and so forth?
(DO NOT READ, RECORD RESPONSE ACCORDINGLY)

Once a day	1
2 or 3 times a week	2
Once a week	3
2-3 times a month	4
Once a month	5
Several times a year	6
Hardly ever	7
Never	8

---

38. And in general, would you say you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of these types of religious programs?

IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly about that?

Favorable/strongly	1
Favorable	2
Unsure (DO NOT READ)	3
Unfavorable	4
Unfavorable/strongly	5

---

39. Think for a moment about the story of Creation in Genesis in the Bible. Which of the following *comes closest* to your beliefs about the Creation story—(READ LIST)

1) The story of the Creation in Genesis is *literally* true, exactly as we find it in the Bible—that is, it took exactly 6 days, or six 24-hour periods for God to create the world.	1
2) The story of Creation is a true account of how God created the world.	2
3) The story of Creation reflects *man's* feelings about how the world may have been created.	3

---

40. When you describe your religious views to someone, do you generally call yourself a fundamentalist, or not?

Yes	1
Unsure (DO NOT READ)	2
No	3

Now I'm going to read the names of some groups and people active in America today. For each one, please tell me if you recognize the group or person, and if so, whether or not you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of that group or person—

	Never Heard of	Heard of Only	Know/ Favorable	Know/ Unfavorable	Know/ No opinion (DON'T READ)
41. Moral Majority	1	2	3	4	5
42. National Conservative Political Action Committee, or "NIC-PAC"	1	2	3	4	5
43. N.O.W.—the National Organization of Women	1	2	3	4	5
44. Jerry Falwell	1	2	3	4	5
45. N.E.A.—The National Education Association	1	2	3	4	5
46. The magazine, *Christianity Today*	1	2	3	4	5
47. Billy Graham	1	2	3	4	5
48. *Sword of the Lord*	1	2	3	4	5

Now I'd like to know how you feel about several types of people, countries, and religious groups. We'll use a scale which runs from 0 to 10, where "0" means you *really dislike* a group, and "10" means you *really like* a group. You can use any number from 0 to 10. First—

49. Israel

Really												Really
Dislike	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Like

50. The Roman Catholic Church—WHICH NUMBER ON THE SCALE WOULD YOU PICK TO DESCRIBE HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. REMEMBER, "0" MEANS YOU REALLY DISLIKE THIS GROUP, AND "10" MEANS YOU REALLY LIKE THE GROUP.

Really												Really
Dislike	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Like

51. Jews (REPEAT INSTRUCTIONS IF NECESSARY)

Really												Really
Dislike	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Like

Now, just a few final questions for statistical purposes only—

52. What is your age, please?

____

(RECORD EXACT AGE)

53. What is the last grade of school you completed? (READ LIST)	Less than high school	1
	High school graduate	2
	Some college	3
	College graduate	4
	Graduate school	5
54. Which of these statements best describes how you usually vote? (READ LIST)	Mostly Republican	1
	A few more Republicans than Democrats	2
	Independent/the man (DO NOT READ)	3
	A few more Democrats than Republicans	4
	Mostly Democrat	5
55. When thinking about politics and government, do you consider yourself to be—(ROTATE)—(1) very conservative, (2) somewhat conservative, (3) somewhat liberal, or (4) very liberal?	Very conservative	1
	Somewhat conservative	2
	Moderate (DO NOT READ)	3
	Somewhat liberal	4
	Very liberal	5

There are many ways of being interested in political and civic affairs. For each activity I read you, please tell me whether you have done it within the past two years.

	Yes	No
56. Contributed to a party or a candidate	1	2
57. Voted in a *primary* election	1	2
58. Volunteered any time for a political candidate or political cause	1	2

59. What type of work does the head of your household do? (PROBE FOR VERY SPECIFIC JOB TITLE—I.E., WHAT THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD DOES—"PLUMBER", "LAWYER," "CONSTRUCTION WORKER". WRITE "UNEMPLOYED" IF APPROPRIATE)

60. We want to classify people into broad income groups for statistical purposes only. What is the approximate annual income of all members of your family? Would it be more than $30,000 or less than $30,000?

IF UNDER $30,000: AND IS THAT OVER OR UNDER $20,000?

IF UNDER: AND IS THAT OVER OR UNDER $10,000?

IF OVER $30,000: AND IS THAT OVER OR UNDER $40,000?

IF OVER: AND IS THAT OVER OR UNDER $50,000?

Under $10,000	1
$10,000-$19,999	2
$20,000-$29,999	3
$30,000-$39,999	4
$40,000-$49,999	5
$50,000 and over	6
Refused	7

61. And what do you consider your race or ethnic background—black, white, Hispanic, or what?

Black	1
White	2
Hispanic	3
Other (SPECIFY)	4

62.	And in which political party are you registered to vote— (ROTATE)— (1) the Republican Party, or (2) the Democratic Party?	Republican	1
		Democratic	2
		Independent/vote for the man (DO NOT READ)	3
63.	Sex (BY OBSERVATION) IF FEMALE, ASK: And are you employed outside the home?	Male	1
		Female/stays at home	2
		Female/works outside the the home	3

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"The partisan identification of an evangelical is [illegible] determined by the social background and the current social standing of that individual . . . We do not find much evidence that evangelicals in this country shift or jump around in their partisan identification based on having different religious experiences."

"(Evangelicals) have long perceived themselves as Democrats, and the Republican Party must provide them with a reason to crossover and vote Republican, or many Christian voters will continue to vote Democratic — particularly for 'down ticket' races."

". . . the religion and degree of religiosity of an evangelical in this country today can have a relationship to his or her attitudes on particular issues in the political marketplace . . . religion is most strongly related to those political attitudes which bear some type of cultural connection to religion."

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